

South Somerset

Local Plan Review Issues and Options Consultation

26 October 2017 to 11 January 2018



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Foreword

This consultation represents the first stage of the South Somerset Local Plan Review. The update will use the same framework as the existing plan but incorporate the latest data, especially around population and economic growth. It will also reflect changes in Government Policy and will eventually incorporate the outcome of the Government's new formula for calculating Objectively Assessed Housing Need. The revision will provide us with a refreshed policy framework that will guide and shape development in the District up to 2034.

The District is facing a number of issues; the population is continuing to grow, with an increasing proportion of older residents, and there is sustained pressure on the need to achieve delivery of new housing of all types and tenures to meet current and emerging need that is affordable to local people. Maintaining access to services and rural connectivity are also important factors.

From an economic perspective, business growth has been stable with strong representation in the manufacturing sector and unemployment levels are low; however the allocated strategic employment sites have not been developed and there is little appetite for office building. Although only a 10 year blip, the scale and duration of having the construction of Hinkley C, Europe's largest engineering project, in relatively close proximity to South Somerset, will inevitably distort the picture in the short to medium term.

The issues in preparing a new plan are wide ranging and will involve not just the Council itself, but also many other organisations and individuals. This Issues and Options consultation provides an opportunity to get involved and give your views and comments.

I must stress that this is only the start in shaping the Local Plan Review and no decisions have yet been made. It is vital that as many individuals and businesses as possible respond to this consultation and your comments will be taken into account in evolving the preferred policy options. Whilst this document is based upon evidence, by testing that against local knowledge and "live" economic factors, I believe that the final version should be stronger and more relevant.



Ric Pallister

Leader of the Council

Contents

1. Introduction.....	1
Purpose of this document.....	1
What is the Local Plan and why are we reviewing it?	1
Evidence Base.....	2
What this document covers	2
Why should I get involved?	3
How to comment	3
Strategic Environmental Appraisal / Sustainability Appraisal	3
Duty to Co-operate	4
2. Spatial Portrait of South Somerset.....	6
Overview	6
Location and Strategic Context	6
Demography & Population	6
Economic Prosperity	6
Housing.....	9
Transport and Accessibility	9
Health and Wellbeing.....	10
Environmental Quality.....	10
Historic Environment.....	10
3. Strategic Objectives and Vision	12
Current Approach	12
The Vision for 2034	12
Strategic Objectives	13
4. Delivering Sustainable Development	15
Current Approach	15
Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development	15
5. Settlement Strategy	16
Current Approach	16
Housing Issues	17
Future Housing Growth	19
Where will the Additional New Housing Growth be Located?	21
Rural Settlements	21
New Garden Towns and Villages	22

Options for the Distribution of Housing Growth	23
Future Employment Growth	24
Employment Issues – Monitoring	27
Infrastructure Delivery	28
Phasing of Development and Previously Developed Land	29
6. Yeovil	31
Spatial Portrait	31
Housing Issues in Yeovil	32
Employment Issues in Yeovil	32
Options for Growth	34
Yeovil Town Centre	40
Infrastructure	45
Yeovil Airfield Flight Safety Zone	48
Delivering Sustainable Travel at Yeovil	48
7. Market Towns	49
Current Approach	49
Primary Market Towns – Chard	49
Spatial Portrait	49
Chard Eastern Development Area	49
Housing	50
Employment	54
Retailing	55
Infrastructure	57
Primary Market Towns – Crewkerne	58
Spatial Portrait	58
Housing	58
Employment	62
Retailing	63
Infrastructure	64
Primary Market Towns – Ilminster	65
Spatial Portrait	65
Housing	66
Employment	69
Retailing	71

Infrastructure	73
Primary Market Towns – Wincanton	73
Spatial Portrait	73
Housing	74
Employment	75
Retailing	79
Infrastructure	82
Local Market Towns – Ansford & Castle Cary	82
Spatial Portrait	82
Housing	83
Employment	84
Retailing	88
Infrastructure	88
Local Market Towns – Langport & Huish Episcopi	89
Spatial Portrait	89
Housing	89
Employment	91
Retailing	93
Infrastructure	93
Local Market Towns – Somerton	94
Spatial Portrait	94
Housing	94
Employment	95
Retailing	98
Infrastructure	99
8. Rural Centres	100
Current Approach	100
Rural Centres - Bruton	100
Spatial Portrait	100
Housing	100
Employment	102
Retailing	103
Infrastructure	103
Rural Centres - Ilchester	104

Spatial Portrait	104
Housing	105
Employment	105
Retailing	107
Infrastructure	108
Rural Centres - Martock and Bower Hinton	108
Spatial Portrait	108
Housing	109
Employment	112
Retailing	112
Infrastructure	113
Rural Centres - Milborne Port	114
Spatial Portrait	114
Housing	114
Employment	117
Retailing	117
Infrastructure	118
Rural Centres - South Petherton	118
Spatial Portrait	118
Housing	119
Employment	123
Retailing	124
Infrastructure	124
Rural Centres - Stoke sub Hamdon	125
Spatial Portrait	125
Housing	125
Employment	128
Retailing	128
Infrastructure	128
9. Economic Prosperity	129
Current Approach	129
Strategic Employment Sites	129
Office Development	131
Safeguarding Employment Land	132

Delivering Employment in the Countryside	132
Retail Hierarchy	133
Shopping in Yeovil	134
Sequential Approach to locating Main Town Centre Uses	134
Retail Impact Assessments.....	135
Protection of Retail Frontages.....	135
Neighbourhood Centres	136
Protection and Provision of Local Shops, Community Facilities and Services	136
10. Housing.....	138
Current Approach	138
Strategic Housing Sites	138
Previously Developed Land Target	138
Affordable Housing	139
Space Standards.....	142
Achieving a Mix of Market Housing	142
Self-build and Custom Housebuilding	143
Care Homes and Specialist Accommodation	144
Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople	145
Replacement Dwellings and Extensions in the Countryside	146
Agricultural, forestry and other occupational dwellings in the countryside	146
11. Transport and Accessibility.....	147
Current Approach	147
District-wide Modal Shift	147
Rail.....	148
Measures to Encourage Sustainable Travel at Chard and Yeovil	148
Travel Plans	148
Transport Impacts of Development	149
Parking Standards	149
12. Health and Wellbeing	151
Current Approach	151
Provision of Open Space, Outdoor Playing Space and Sports, Cultural and Community Facilities in New Development	151
Sports Zone	151
Protection of Play Spaces and Youth Provision	152

13.	Environmental Quality	153
	Current Approach	153
	Addressing Climate Change in South Somerset	153
	General Development	154
	Historic Environment.....	154
	Biodiversity.....	154
	Green Infrastructure	155
	Woodlands and Forests	155
	Pollution Control.....	155
	Equine Development	156
14.	Implementation and Monitoring.....	157
	Current Approach	157
15.	Glossary	158

1. Introduction

Purpose of this document

- 1.1 This document represents the first consultation stage in the South Somerset Local Plan Review (LPR).
- 1.2 It is important that there is early and meaningful engagement in the LPR process. In accordance with Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 this consultation document has been prepared to support engagement with the general public, statutory consultees, local communities, businesses, voluntary groups, other public organisations, landowners and other bodies that the Council has a 'duty to cooperate' with (see p.4 – Duty to Cooperate).
- 1.3 We are seeking your views on the alternative options for addressing spatial planning issues in the District. The document sets out a number of questions and accompanying options in order to focus responses on the key issues going forward.
- 1.4 Representations made at this stage will help to refine options or could identify possible alternatives to be considered going forward.

What is the Local Plan and why are we reviewing it?

- 1.5 The Local Plan includes policies to support the Council's long-term vision and strategic context for managing and accommodating residential and economic growth across South Somerset. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) highlights that Local Plans are key to delivering sustainable development. Planning decisions must be made in accordance with the Development Plan¹ unless material considerations indicate otherwise.² The adopted Local Plan covers the period 2006-2028³. The LPR will be rebased and will roll forward six years covering the period 2014-2034.
- 1.6 The South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028) was adopted in March 2015. The Inspector, in accepting that the Local Plan was 'sound', set out that the Council should undertake an early review of the policies relating to housing and employment provision in Wincanton. This early review was to be completed within three years of the date of adoption, which would be no later than March 2018.
- 1.7 The Council previously stated that it will produce a Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) to provide the additional detail on proposals for the 'Sustainable Urban Extensions' in Yeovil and 'Directions of Growth' in Market Towns.
- 1.8 Because the Site Allocations DPD and early review of policies relating to Wincanton require a refresh of much of the underlying evidence base, the Council has agreed

¹ The Development Plan consists of the adopted Local Plan and any 'made' neighbourhood plan.

² Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

³ <https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/south-somerset-local-plan-2006-2028/adopted-south-somerset-local-plan/>

that it would be more efficient to combine the Site Allocations DPD with the review of the Wincanton policies, and effectively review the current Local Plan in its entirety.

- 1.9 It is important to have an up to date local plan to ensure that it is effective. Most local plans are likely to require updating in part or in whole at least every five years.

Evidence Base

- 1.10 The evidence base forms the basis for identifying the issues set out in this document. Much of the evidence base that supported the Local Plan has been updated.
- 1.11 Identified constraints such as landscape and heritage assets and suitable, available and achievable land have been used to identify the site specific options.
- 1.12 References and links to evidence base documents are provided throughout this document.

What this document covers

- 1.13 The document is set out in sections broadly reflecting those in the current Local Plan.
- 1.14 Issues have been identified through consideration of changes in national policy and legislation, new evidence, particularly with regard to new housing and employment needs, and internal monitoring on what we see happening in South Somerset. They combine to highlight the key spatial planning issues facing South Somerset at the present time.
- 1.15 Options for addressing these key issues are presented in each section of the report. The options for addressing the overall distribution of employment and housing growth are considered in the 'Settlement Strategy' section, and site specific options for where additional growth could be located are discussed in the settlement specific sections. More sites have been identified in this document than are required to accommodate the future growth needs of the District.
- 1.16 The preferred options for growth will be influenced by the responses to this document and the overall strategy for distribution of growth. Many of the options referred to in the settlement sections have been the subject of previous planning applications and/or have been suggested by developers and landowners. In some cases further work is required to assess the suitability and deliverability the sites.
- 1.17 Throughout the document questions are in blue boxes and options are in the green boxes.

Question

Option

Why should I get involved?

- 1.18 It is important that you make your views known and take this opportunity to contribute to the LPR. Consultation is being undertaken in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)⁴. Main issues raised at this stage will help to inform the preparation of the Plan going forward. If you are aware of a spatial planning issue that is not identified in this document then please bring it to our attention.

How to comment

- 1.19 You can make comment in a number ways:



Online via the website

www.southsomerset.gov.uk/issuesandoptions



Email

planningpolicy@southsomerset.gov.uk



In writing to

Spatial Policy Team
Council Offices
Brympton Way
Yeovil
BA20 2HT

- 1.20 Hard Copies of the document are available to view during normal opening hours at the following District Council offices and in libraries across the District:

- Brympton Way, Yeovil
- Petters House, Yeovil
- Churchfields, Wincanton
- Holyrood Lace Mill, Chard
- Library opening times can be found here: <http://www.somerset.gov.uk/libraries-and-heritage/using-the-library/find-your-library/>

Strategic Environmental Appraisal / Sustainability Appraisal

- 1.21 The first stage in the production of a Local Plan is the preparation of a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Scoping Report. This document identifies the key environmental, social and economic issues for the LPR and establishes SA objectives for testing the

⁴ South Somerset Statement of Community Involvement, December 2015
https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/806406/statement_of_community_involvement_final_adopted_dec_2015.pdf

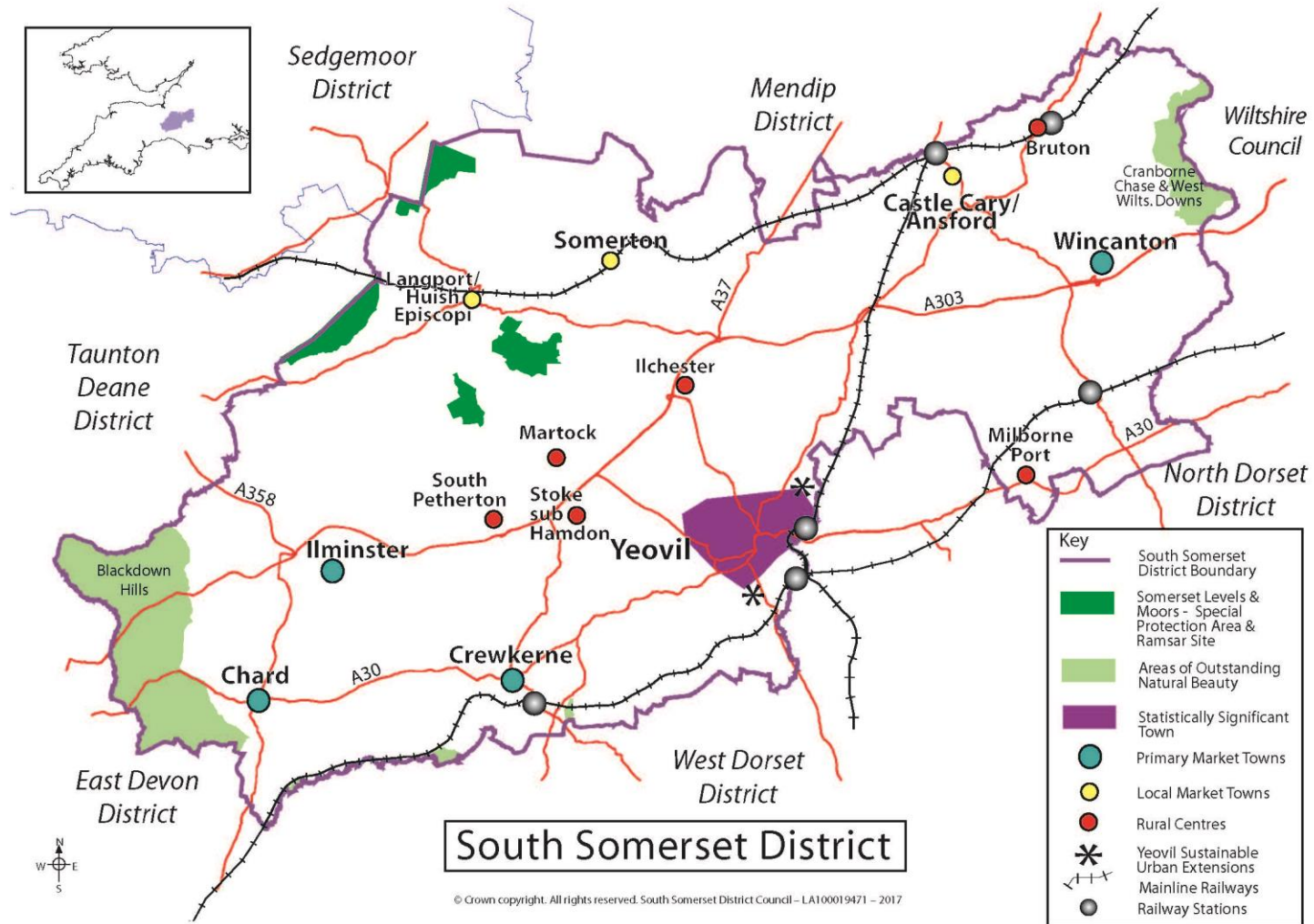
Local Plan proposals. SA incorporates the requirements of the SEA Directive⁵ which seek to establish whether a programme or plan is widely to have significant environmental effects. The aim is to ensure that these policies contribute towards achieving sustainable development. A Sustainability Appraisal of this document has been prepared and is available on the Council's website.

Duty to Co-operate

- 1.22 The legal requirement on the Council to co-operate with statutory and non-statutory partners is an ongoing one. This work ensures that strategically significant issues that have potential cross boundary impacts are discussed. The Council is mindful of its direct relationships with local authorities, as well as its functional relationships with a range of authorities. South Somerset adjoins West Dorset District Council, North Dorset District Council, Wiltshire Council, Mendip District Council, Sedgemoor District Council, Taunton Deane Borough Council and East Devon Council. The Council has been and will continue to engage with these adjoining councils and the other specified bodies.

⁵ Directive 2001/42/EC

Figure 1.1: Map of South Somerset



2. Spatial Portrait of South Somerset

Overview

- 2.1 The spatial portrait section aims to set out what South Somerset is like today. The following sections provide a snapshot of the key strategic and geographic issues affecting the demographic, economic, social and environmental structure of South Somerset.

Location and Strategic Context

- 2.2 South Somerset is located within the south-west of England. It is the largest district in Somerset and covers an area of 370 square miles.⁶
- 2.3 It is a largely rural district spread across a number of towns, villages and hamlets. The rural nature of the area is emphasised by the low population density of 1.7 persons per hectare (the England average is 4.1).
- 2.4 South Somerset has a number of settlements of similar size – reflecting their historic market town status and the geographical extent of the District. Questions about how best to support sustainable development in these locations and ensuring appropriate infrastructure provision are important considerations in this LPR.

Demography & Population

- 2.5 South Somerset has a population of 164,982 people⁷; since 2001 it has grown at a relatively consistent rate of around one thousand people per year. Yeovil is the largest town in the District, with a population in 2011 of 45,339⁸.
- 2.6 The main cause of population growth in South Somerset is internal migration from within the UK⁹, mostly in the 65-69 age group, highlighting the attractiveness of the District to retirees.
- 2.7 South Somerset's population is ageing, with a sharp growth in those aged over 60. Recent data shows significant losses in those aged 30 to 44¹⁰. It is likely that this trend will continue over the long term, therefore the District may face challenges in providing a sufficiently large and competitive labour force in the future.

Economic Prosperity

- 2.8 The South Somerset economy does not operate in isolation. Influences at the national, regional and local level affect how the economy functions. A Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA) captures the way in which the economy and commercial markets operate in a given location. Local authorities are required to

⁶ 236,989 acres; 95,906 hectares

⁷ ONS Mid –year Population estimate 2015

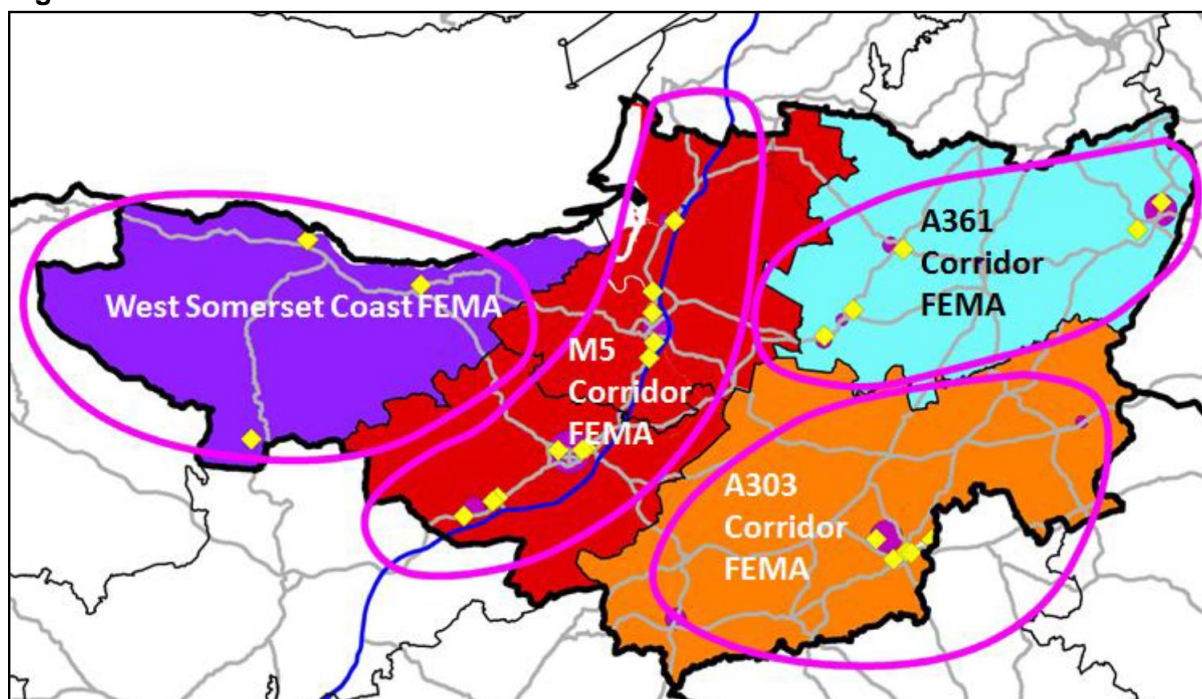
⁸ South Somerset Authority Monitoring Report, September 2017

⁹ South Somerset Authority Monitoring Report, September 2016

¹⁰ South Somerset Authority Monitoring Report, September 2017

plan to meet the land and floorspace needs of businesses within the FEMA that is relevant to them. For planning purposes, South Somerset District broadly comprises a FEMA. The FEMA extends along the A303 corridor a strategic transport route connecting Somerset with the wider South West. The FEMA is shown in Figure 2.1 below.

Figure 2.1: Functional Economic Market Areas in Somerset



Source: Housing Market Areas and Functional Economic Market Areas in Somerset, ORS, 2015

- 2.9 The A303 corridor provides a strong 'east-west' axis through the District, facilitating business connectivity as well as easy access to markets, labour, goods and materials. Planned improvements to the A303 and the A358, by Highways England, present an opportunity to strengthen the economy of South Somerset.
- 2.10 Overall, there is a high degree of self-containment; 80% of people living in South Somerset also work in the District, and 81% of all jobs in the District are filled by residents¹¹.
- 2.11 Whilst the population of South Somerset has been growing, the traditional working age population (those aged 16-64) has been falling since 2008. The economic activity rate and employment rate are both higher in South Somerset than the national average and unemployment is lower than the regional and national benchmarks, both of which suggests a high number of people of working age are working¹².

¹¹ South Somerset Employment Land Evidence: review of FEMAs and Understanding Market Trends, HJA, 2017

¹² South Somerset Employment Land Evidence: review of FEMAs and Understanding Market Trends, HJA, 2017

- 2.12 South Somerset has a lower proportion of its working age population qualified to the highest level (NVQ Level 4 and above) than national and regional benchmarks. This is reflected in the occupational profile, with fewer residents employed in professional occupations or as senior managers. Earnings are lower in South Somerset than the South West and national average¹³.
- 2.13 The structure of the South Somerset economy has traditionally been dominated by agriculture, manufacturing and advanced engineering. There is a strong over representation of people working in the manufacturing sector, particularly aerospace manufacturing, reflecting the long history of rotorcraft manufacturing and its associated supply chains in the District. There is also a concentration of food manufacturing. The predominance of manufacturing exists alongside an under-representation of what might be termed “office based” activities such as financial, professional, and business services.
- 2.14 South Somerset has experienced a much slower growth in its business base than comparator areas, although the survival rates of businesses which do form are good. Micro businesses (0-9 employees) are important to the local economy; 89.7% of all enterprises are classed as micro-businesses¹⁴.
- 2.15 ONS Jobs Density is the most complete measure of all jobs in an area. This records 82,000 jobs in South Somerset in 2015, equivalent to 0.86 jobs per working age person, which is in line with national and regional averages¹⁵.
- 2.16 Whilst current participation in the labour market is high, the economy has not seen any real growth in jobs in recent years. This, in addition to the reliance on the manufacturing sector, which is forecast to decline, and lower educational attainment and skills levels, is of concern. Micro businesses are incredibly important to the area.
- 2.17 Yeovil town centre is the largest in South Somerset in terms of physical size and trading ability. Yeovil is supported by a number of small market towns, district and local centres that serve a more local catchment area, according to size. Whilst Yeovil remains the most important centre within the District, the town centre has suffered mixed fortunes over recent years. It faces competition from out-of-town retail parks including the Peel Centre in West Dorset and, since 2006, the recessionary impacts have been felt in the town centre, with an increase in vacancy rates; they currently stand at 16.9% which is higher than the national average 11.2%¹⁶. Future plans for the regeneration of Yeovil and Chard Town Centre are integral to the Council’s “investing in infrastructure” programme.

¹³ South Somerset Employment Land Evidence: review of FEMAs and Understanding Market Trends, HJA, 2017

¹⁴ South Somerset Employment Land Evidence: review of FEMAs and Understanding Market Trends, HJA, 2017

¹⁵ South Somerset Employment Land Evidence: review of FEMAs and Understanding Market Trends, HJA, 2017

¹⁶ South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study, 2017

Housing

- 2.18 The housing market in which South Somerset operates and for which the LPR must plan to meet housing need is known as the Housing Market Area (HMA). The HMA for South Somerset has been confirmed as being the District boundary¹⁷.
- 2.19 Affordability remains an issue across the District, with an average home in South Somerset costing around 7.5 times the average income.¹⁸ This makes it difficult for those people who are not yet on the housing market to buy a home. Prices in South Somerset are on a par with the County as a whole; albeit in some cases a little lower than in Taunton Deane. Prices are higher in Sedgemoor, except for flats. Prices in Mendip are consistently higher than across the rest of the County, probably due to the proximity of many of its settlements to Bath and Bristol where the economies are especially strong.
- 2.20 Lower end property prices in the District (March 2015) range from £80,000 for a flat to £237,000 for a detached dwelling¹⁹.
- 2.21 Given the ageing population within the District – the population aged 65+ in South Somerset is set to increase by 57.5% between 2014 and 2039²⁰ – there will be a need to consider housing options to meet the needs of older people.
- 2.22 There is a continuing need to find accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, both for transit and permanent sites.²¹

Transport and Accessibility

- 2.23 South Somerset is well linked to other areas by three major railway lines with regular daily services to London, Exeter, Bristol and Weymouth. The A303 Trunk Road and the A30 run east to west through the District and link it with London and the south west peninsula. Highways England has recently consulted on proposals to upgrade the A303 between Sparkford and Ilchester to dual carriageway (2017) and also plan improvements to the A358 Taunton to Southfields (Ilminster).
- 2.24 Bus service coverage is poor, reflecting the rural nature of the District, and services are infrequent except in the largest settlements.
- 2.25 Congestion is an issue of local concern in Yeovil, Crewkerne and Chard. There is a heavy reliance on the car for journeys to work and services. This presents a challenge for the District to move to more carbon friendly modes of travel.

¹⁷ Housing Market Areas and Functional Economic Market Areas in Somerset, ORS, 2015
https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/797657/2015_09_29_somerset_hma_and_fema_final_report.pdf

¹⁸ South Somerset Authority Monitoring Report, September 2017

¹⁹ SHMA, 2016 Figure 6.1, page 137

²⁰ Mendip, Sedgemoor, South Somerset and Taunton Deane Strategic Housing Market Assessment, October 2016, Figure 11.2, page 216
https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/862544/somerset_final_shma_oct2016_revised.pdf

²¹ Gypsy and Traveller Needs Assessment Update, September 2013
https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/856723/final_copy_12_september_2013.pdf

Health and Wellbeing

- 2.26 The residents of South Somerset are generally in good health; in 2011 only 1% of people ranked themselves as having very bad health²². National health issues such as increasing levels of obesity, declining physical activity levels and an ageing population bring their challenges.
- 2.27 A number of Local Super Output areas in Yeovil and Chard are within the most deprived 20% in England; conversely both towns have areas within the least deprived 20% in England²³
- 2.28 The life expectancy at time of birth for South Somerset residents in 2014 was 80.9 years for males and 84.40 years for females²⁴; this compares well to the South West life expectancy of 80.2 years for males and 83.2 years for females. The national average is a life expectancy of 79.5 years for males and 83.2 for females²⁵.
- 2.29 Some residents, particularly in rural areas, suffer inequalities. High house prices make it difficult to enter the housing market, even from a rental perspective. Whilst poor public transport can make access to employment and services such as a GP surgery, supermarket or convenience store / post office, and primary school difficult. This inequality can be compounded by poor mobile and broadband services, making online alternatives for example, for healthcare, also inaccessible.

Environmental Quality

- 2.30 South Somerset has a mainly undulating, agricultural landscape with some very fertile belts that have traditionally been farmed for top quality products such as apples and dairy produce. Topography and agricultural practices have helped secure special status for outstanding landscapes such as the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) to the south west, a small part of the Cranborne Chase and West Wilts AONB to the north east, and the Dorset AONB which runs along the southern boundary of the District.
- 2.31 South Somerset is known for areas of high nature conservation value. The European designation of Special Protection Area and RAMSAR²⁶ site applies to parts of the Somerset Levels and Moors in the north of the District. There are two other National Nature Reserves at Hardington Moor and Barrington Hill, near Ilminster.

Historic Environment

- 2.32 South Somerset has a rich and diverse historic environment. The villages and historic parts of the larger settlements are built with distinctive local stone such as Ham Stone and Blue Lias. The area has a high concentration of Listed Buildings and

²² Census 2011: Key Figures for Health Care

²³ Super Output Areas are units of area used by the Office of National Statistics to gather and compare data.

²⁴ Somerset Intelligence Partnership: Index of Multiple Deprivation

²⁵ ONS Census 2011

²⁶ Designated by the RAMSAR Convention (The Convention on Wetland of International Importance, especially as Waterfowl Habitat) as a term to identify wetland sites of international importance.

Conservation Areas as well as Listed Parks and Gardens and estates owned by the National Trust. There are 97 Grade I Listed buildings in South Somerset, and 89 Conservation Areas

- 2.33 There is a strong link between the environmental quality and productivity of the area and the success of the local economy, through commerce, recreation, tourism and providing an environment where people want to live and work.

3. Strategic Objectives and Vision

Current Approach

- 3.1 The Local Plan has a long-term spatial vision for where we want the District to be in 2028. We now need to decide if this is the same vision we want going forward to 2034 or whether our vision has changed.
- 3.2 The Council Plan 2016 - 2021²⁷ provides a clear focus for the Council and what it will deliver during a period of major change. The Council's Aims are to:
- Protect Core services to the public by reducing costs and seeking income generation.
 - Increase the focus on jobs and economic development.
 - Protect and enhance the quality of our environment.
 - Enable housing to meet all needs.
 - Improve health and reduce health inequalities.
- 3.3 The Council's Priority Projects for the year 2017-2018 are as follows:
1. To implement the Transformation programme including income generation;
 2. To complete the updating of the plans for regenerating Central Yeovil and Chard and progress implementation;
 3. To deliver Phase 2 of the Yeovil Innovation Centre;
 4. To complete the refurbishment and relaunch of the Westlands Complex;
 5. To facilitate appropriate local development with both council and national funding; and
 6. To support our small and medium sized businesses across the District, including internet access, to meet their needs.
- 3.4 The Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017 was enacted in April 2017; it requires local planning authorities to identify in their development plan documents, the strategic priorities for the development of land in their area.²⁸

The Vision for 2034

- 3.5 The current vision to 2028 is very long and is, in part, outdated.
- 3.6 It is suggested that the LPR includes a shorter, more succinct, vision for the District up to 2034:

South Somerset will be a thriving, attractive and socially inclusive place to live, work, study and visit. It will have sustainable, low carbon towns with enhanced green infrastructure and public transport links. The District will have high quality distinctive, historic, urban and rural environments, with vital and vibrant town centres, a

²⁷ https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/883940/council_plan.pdf

²⁸ Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017, section 8
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/20/contents/enacted>

prosperous and productive economy and provide a choice of high quality housing options for all. Inequality between urban and rural areas will be reduced with improved digital accessibility.

Question 3.1

Do you agree with the suggested vision to 2034, and, if not, how should it be changed?

Strategic Objectives

3.7 The Strategic Objectives set out on the Local Plan are derived from the spatial goals in the South Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS)²⁹ and the core planning principles set out in the NPPF.³⁰ It is suggested that these Objectives are still applicable to the suggested revised Vision:

1. A health enhancing environment, promoting walking, cycling and non-car based transport and access to leisure opportunities.
2. Access to quality services and facilities designed around the needs of the community, enabling everyone to have fair and equitable access to what they need in their local area.
3. An integrated sustainable transport system developed both within and between towns especially to and from Yeovil, whilst promoting enhanced delivery of services direct to rural areas through Information and Computer Technologies.
4. A comprehensive, high performing economy that is diverse, adaptable and provides jobs growth and inward investment through a thriving Yeovil, regenerated Chard and market towns and a diversified rural economy.
5. A natural and built environment able to attract and retain visitors, a vibrant tourism industry and encourage inward investment of high quality sustainable businesses.
6. A balanced housing market with a range of both general and affordable housing to meet the required growth and sited and built to support sustainable lifestyles with low carbon emissions, delivered through a sustainable District settlement strategy and hierarchy.
7. Address climate change through both mitigation and adaptation and move towards a Carbon Neutral economy by the Government target date of 2030³¹ by delivering high quality and energy efficient development with exemplar development at Yeovil to move towards more sustainable, lower carbon consumption living and to provide a boost to new low carbon technologies.

²⁹ Shaping South Somerset, A Strategy for Sustainable Communities 2008-2026, South Somerset Together https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/15625/South_Somerset_Community_Strategy.pdf

³⁰ NPPF (2012) paragraph 17 sets out 12 overarching principles of the planning system.

³¹ Current Government Policy is to reduce the carbon budget to 57% below 1990 levels by 2030. This is based on update advice from the Climate Change Committee in June 2016.

8. Protection and enhancement of our natural environment, historic environment and biodiversity, retaining the distinctiveness of settlements and reflecting known environmental constraints, including flood risks in locating growth.

- 3.8 Strategic Objective 7 no longer accords with the latest Government targets on climate change. These are based upon reducing the carbon budget against 1990 levels. The aim is to reduce the carbon budget by 57% below 1990 levels by 2030.

Question 3.2

Do you agree these Strategic Objectives are still relevant for the LPR, and, if not, how should they be changed?

4. Delivering Sustainable Development

Current Approach

- 4.1 Policy SD1 (Sustainable Development) mirrors the presumption in favour of sustainable development as set in paragraph 14 of the NPPF; it is seen "...as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking."

Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

- 4.2 National guidance previously encouraged local planning authorities (LPAs) to include a policy in their local plans reflecting paragraph 14 of the NPPF. The Housing White Paper: "Fixing our broken housing market", February 2017³², consults on a revised paragraph 14. Therefore, if paragraph 14 is amended, Policy SD1 will no longer be consistent with national guidance. The Housing White Paper also signals an intention to amend the NPPF to make it clear that there is no need for plans and policies to duplicate each other and that authorities may rely on policies in the NPPF.

Question 4.1

Which of the following options should be taken forward through the LPR?

Option 4.1

- 4.1(a)** Revise Policy SD1 to reflect a revised paragraph 14 of the NPPF.
- 4.1(b)** Delete Policy SD1 and supporting text and rely on the revised paragraph 14 of the NPPF.

³²https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/590464/Fixing_our_broken_housing_market_-_print_ready_version.pdf

5. Settlement Strategy

Current Approach

5.1 The Settlement Strategy in the Local Plan consists of two elements:

- A hierarchy of settlements based upon their current and potential role and function; and
- A scale of growth for employment and housing.

5.2 Figure 5.1 summarises the current Local Plan requirements for housing, employment land and jobs.

Figure 5.1: Housing and Employment Requirements by Settlement

Settlement	Total Housing Requirement 2006-2028 (Policy SS5)	Total Employment Requirement 2006-2028 Land (ha) (Policy SS3)	Total Jobs to be encouraged 2006-2028 Jobs (Policy SS3)
Strategically Significant Town			
Yeovil	7,441 1,565 of which to be delivered in the two Sustainable Urban Extensions	44.84 plus 5.16 in the two Sustainable Urban Extensions	3,948 plus 1,565 in the two Sustainable Urban Extensions
Primary Market Towns			
Chard	1,852	17.14	1,083
Crewkerne	961	10.10	577
Ilminster	496	23.05	419
Wincanton	703	7.94	599
Local Market Towns			
Ansford & Castle Cary	374	18.97	273
Langport & Huish Episcopi	374	4.01	284
Somerton	374	6.63	307
Rural Centres			
Bruton	203	3.06	156
Ilchester	141	1.02	433
Martock and Bower Hinton	230	3.19	163
Milborne Port	279	0.84	77
South Petherton	229	2.47	141
Stoke sub Hamdon	51	1.09	43
Rural Settlements			
Settlements that offer two or more of the services listed in paragraph 5.41 of the Local Plan ³³	2,242	No figure given	1,181
TOTAL	15,950	149.51	11,249

Source: South Somerset Local Plan 2006-2028

³³ Paragraph 5.41 lists: local convenience shop; post office; pub; children's play area/sports pitch; village hall/community centre; health centre; faith facility; and primary school.

- 5.3 The housing growth has been distributed in the following proportions:
- Yeovil: 47% of growth;
 - Market Towns: 32% of growth (25% in Primary Market Towns and 7% in Local Market Towns);
 - Rural Centres: 7% of growth; and
 - Rural Settlements: 14% of growth.
- 5.4 The employment land has been distributed in the following proportions:
- Yeovil : 33.5% of growth;
 - Market Towns: 59% of growth (39% in Primary Market Towns and 20% in Local Market Towns);
 - Rural Centres: 7.5% of growth; and
 - Rural Settlements: no employment land figure has been identified.
- 5.5 In order to provide more certainty for the development industry and local people, the LPR will move away from Directions of Growth and allocate land for housing and economic development purposes. This document identifies site options for growth. The Council's preferred options for allocations and the overall distribution of growth will be identified at the next stage of the process.

Housing Issues

- 5.6 Councils are expected to have a five-year housing land supply. As of September 2017, South Somerset does not have a five-year housing land supply, having a supply equating to 4.2 years³⁴. In light of paragraph 47 of the NPPF and only having delivered the annualised housing requirement twice in the last ten years, the Council is considered to have a record of 'persistent under delivery' and has therefore applied a 20% increase to its overall housing target.
- 5.7 The Authority Monitoring Report, 2017 (AMR)³⁵ confirms that the Council is behind target on the delivery of homes District-wide. The reality, in terms of when developments come forward and are built out, is linked to a whole range of issues outside of the Council's direct control, including access to finance, market capacity, sales rates, landownership agreements, infrastructure investment and delivery. Housing delivery in specific settlements is considered in the relevant sections of this document.
- 5.8 Figure 5.2 shows that over the Plan period so far, housing delivery in the Rural Settlements has been greater than expected. This is also true of delivery in Wincanton, Langport, South Petherton, Milborne Port, Ilminster and Bruton. Delivery in Yeovil and Chard however, is considerably less than the annualised average through to 2017.

³⁴ South Somerset District Council Five-Year Housing Land Supply Paper (September 2017)

³⁵ South Somerset Authority Monitoring Report, September 2017

Table 5.2: Residential completions and commitments against Local Plan requirements

Settlement	Local Plan 2006-2028 Total Housing Requirement	Annualised Target for 2017 (11/22 Years)	Total Completions 2006 - 2017 (net)	Difference Against Annualised Target for 2017	Existing housing commitments as at 31 st March 2017 (net)	Total Completions and Commitments as at 31 st March 2017 (net)	Performance against Local Plan Target (F-C) (+ or -)
Strategically Significant Town							
Yeovil	7441	3720	2385	-1335	1361	3746	-3695
Primary Market Towns							
Chard	1852	926	655	-271	201	856	-996
Crewkerne	961	481	355	-126	610	965	4
Ilminster	496	248	264	16	120	384	-112
Wincanton	703	352	638	286	306	944	241
Local Market Towns							
Ansford/Castle Cary	374	187	68	-119	523	591	217
Langport /Huish Episcopi	374	187	297	110	152	449	75
Somerton	374	187	108	-79	366	474	100
Rural Centres							
Bruton	203	102	108	6	76	184	-19
Ilchester	141	71	0	-71	161	161	20
Martock	230	115	93	-22	127	220	-10
Milborne Port	279	140	227	87	29	256	-23
South Petherton	229	114	232	118	28	260	31
Stoke Sub Hamdon	51	25	7	-18	48	55	4
Rural Settlements	2242	1121	1431	310	1100	2531	289
Total	15950	7975	6868	-1107	5208	12076	-3874

Source: SSDC Authority Monitoring Report (September 2017)

Future Housing Growth

- 5.9 The current Local Plan has an annual housing target of 725 dwellings per year. Additional evidence based work has been undertaken since this target was adopted; a joint Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) has been prepared by JG Consulting on behalf of the Somerset Authorities (excluding West Somerset)³⁶. National planning policies require the SHMA to define the “full objectively assessed need for market and affordable housing” (OAN)³⁷.
- 5.10 A number of scenarios were tested to derive the OAN for South Somerset. These are set out below:

Figure 5.3: Scenarios Tested to Consider Objectively Assessed Housing Need 2014-2039

Projection scenario	Dwellings per annum
2014-based Sub National Household Projections	547
2014-based Sub National Household Projections + adjustment for mid-year population estimates	540
Oxford Economics jobs-led projection + 2014-based Sub National Household Projections headship rates	589
10-year based migration trend projection + adjustment for un-attributable population change + 2014-based Sub National Household Projections headship rates	597
10-year based migration trend projection + 2014-based Sub National Household Projections headship rates	597³⁸
Past trend jobs-led projection, 2014 – based Sub National Household Projections headship rates	720

Source: SHMA, October 2016

- 5.11 The analysis identified an increase in the number of concealed households³⁹ across the County and an adjustment to the need figures is suggested to make an allowance for this.
- 5.12 Additionally, the study highlights a need for ‘older person’ accommodation (e.g. care home bedspaces). For South Somerset, this equates to 51 bedspaces per annum. If these are added to the OAN and consequently included in the five-year housing land supply the OAN would be as follows:

³⁶ Mendip, Sedgemoor, South Somerset and Taunton Deane Strategic Housing Market Assessment, J G Consulting, October 2016

https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/862544/somerset_final_shma_oct2016_revised.pdf

³⁷ Paragraph 47 NPPF, 2012

³⁸ This number is the same as the figure above because of the effect of Unattributable Population Change (UPC). Between the Census in 2001 and Census in 2011 there was some poor accounting of both internal and international migration, and this affected certain local areas more than others. In South Somerset, the UPC ends up only being “+8” and therefore has a negligible effect, meaning that South Somerset’s figure for per annum housing stays the same at 597 in both scenarios.

³⁹ A concealed household is a household that would like a home of its own but is currently sharing with another household.

Figure 5.4: Upper end of the range for Objectively Assessed Need – Including Allowance for Concealed Households 2014-2039

Projection Scenario	Dwellings per annum
10-year based migration trend projection + 2014-based Sub National Household Projections headship rates	597
Annual allowance for concealed households	10
Annual allowance for older person bedspaces	51 bedspaces
Total	658 (suggested that this would be rounded to 660)

Source: SHMA, October 2016

- 5.13 If an OAN of **660 dwellings per annum** (including bedspaces for older people) were taken forward it would result in a housing requirement of **13,200 over the period 2014-2034⁴⁰**.
- 5.14 Once housing completions and commitments (dwellings under construction and not started) are taken into account the residual housing requirement for the District would be around **6,000 dwellings**.
- 5.15 If older person bedspaces are not included in the OAN then they cannot be counted towards the Council's five-year supply of housing land. Given the identified need, the requirement would have to be met through its inclusion in a policy elsewhere in the Plan.
- 5.16 The SHMA has been produced in accordance with the methodology currently set out in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). However, the Housing White Paper states the Government's intention to introduce a more standardised methodology for calculating the OAN. This methodology is currently being consulted on and if taken forward would result in a slightly different annual requirement⁴¹.

Question 5.1

Which of the following options should be taken forward through the LPR?

Option 5.1

- 5.1(a)** Progress on the basis of an OAN of 13,200 dwellings (includes bedspaces for older people)
- 5.1(b)** Progress on the basis of another OAN. Please provide a detailed justification for any alternative suggestion

⁴⁰ 660 x 20 = 13,200. If included in the OAN new care home bedspaces can be counted as part of the monitoring.

⁴¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-the-right-homes-in-the-right-places-consultation-proposals>

Where will the Additional New Housing Growth be Located?

- 5.17 Influencing the location of future growth can help to achieve a more sustainable pattern of development. Typically this means focussing growth on larger settlements, which already have a range of jobs and services, but it is also important to provide opportunities for people in more rural areas.
- 5.18 The LPR needs to determine where the additional housing, employment and retail growth required to meet the needs of the District up until 2034 is located.
- 5.19 As explained, the current focus of growth is Yeovil, followed by the Market Towns, and then a higher proportion of growth is directed towards the Rural Settlements rather than the Rural Centres⁴².
- 5.20 It is important that the distribution of the additional growth going forward is carefully considered and is focussed where it can be delivered. This is particularly important given that a number of the 14 settlements – where a target figure is specified – have not delivered their annualised housing target thus far into the Plan period⁴³.
- 5.21 The LPR provides an opportunity to consider whether the Council wishes to pursue the existing spatial distribution of growth or to consider another option. Viability is a key element to the delivery of any strategy. Approaches could include a more dispersed pattern of growth with allocations focussed towards Market Towns and Rural Centres or potentially the introduction of a ‘Villages’ category of settlement which sits between the Rural Centres and the Rural Settlements.

Rural Settlements

- 5.22 The existing Local Plan (Policy SS2) seeks to strictly control and limit development in and around Rural Centres to that which provides employment opportunities, creates or enhances community facilities, and/or meets identified housing need. It says development should be commensurate with the scale and character of the settlement, be consistent with community-led plans, and generally have the support of the local community following robust engagement and consultation.
- 5.23 We cannot ignore that development in Rural Settlements has contributed to a vital part of housing delivery in South Somerset and more housing has been delivered in the first 11 years of the Local Plan period in these locations than the settlement strategy envisaged. Larger Rural Settlements appear to be the focus for most development but there are also significant commitments in other smaller locations. It will be important to continue to monitor the situation as without some control there may be a risk of over-development. Given the current lack of a five-year housing land supply, it may be considered that the benefits of housing delivery in these locations outweigh the existing strategic approach to housing delivery and mean that an alternative spatial strategy needs to be considered.
- 5.24 One way in which Policy SS2 could be amended to ensure that development is focussed on the most sustainable of the Rural Settlements may be by amending the

⁴² Local Plan Policies SS1 (Settlement Strategy) and SS5 (Delivering New Housing Growth)

⁴³ South Somerset Authority Monitoring Report, September 2017

list of services set out in paragraph 5.41 of the adopted Local Plan⁴⁴. Currently, settlements are expected to have at least two of the listed facilities in order to qualify as an SS2 settlement. The list includes: local convenience shop; post office; pub; children's play area/sports pitch; village hall/community centre; health centre; faith facility; and primary school. One option could be to include the requirement for a settlement to have three of the facilities currently listed rather than two. Another option could be to combine existing facilities, thereby reducing the "list"; for example the faith facility could be combined with the village hall/community centre, as these all provide community meeting places, and the post office could be combined with the convenience shop, as these are often co-located in the same premises.

- 5.25 Paragraph 5.44 of the Local Plan requires applicants to fully explain how their housing proposals meet the housing need in a Rural Settlement. It is generally expected that affordable housing is included as part of a housing scheme and some cases may be predominant especially where the application has been justified using the results of a local housing needs survey. It is important that the policy does not inhibit the provision of affordable housing in Rural Settlements by raising house value⁴⁵ for the provision of market housing.
- 5.26 The level of affordable housing in Rural Settlements has also been affected by the voluntary disposal of Housing Association stock where it is not subject to a Section 106 Agreement.
- 5.27 An initial assessment of existing Rural Settlements shows that there are a number of settlements that currently have a good range of local services, some employment opportunities, and sites that could accommodate additional growth. These include settlements like Keinton Mandeville, Curry Rivel and Merriott, where developments of between thirty and fifty dwellings have previously been approved.
- 5.28 Given the role of smaller settlements in delivering housing growth in South Somerset, an option could be to add an additional settlement category 'Villages' to Policy SS1 (Settlement Strategy). These would be settlements with a level of services, self-containment and development opportunities that could justify a specific level of growth and/or small scale allocations.
- 5.29 Additional evidence base work would need to be undertaken to identify the settlements that would be suitable for inclusion in this category should it be introduced.

New Garden Towns and Villages

- 5.30 In 2016, the Government sought expressions of interest from Councils towards funding for new garden towns and villages. These are not intended as urban extensions but free standing new settlements. A 'garden town' is a development of more than 10,000 homes. 'Garden villages' are smaller settlements of between 1,500 and 10,000 homes⁴⁶. Whilst the window for the original expressions of interest has

⁴⁴ Services are: local convenience shop; post office; pub; children's play area/sports pitch; village hall/community centre; health centre; faith facility; and primary school

⁴⁵ This could mean that the ability to provide affordable housing on site could be more difficult as the land price will be more.

⁴⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/first-ever-garden-villages-named-with-government-support>

closed there may be a further opportunity in the near future. Many garden towns, Taunton's for instance, are located adjacent to existing towns and encompass existing allocated areas.

- 5.31 If South Somerset District Council were to allocate a Garden Village, this would be part of a longer term strategy. Significant additional work would have to be undertaken to consider where the most sustainable location for such a settlement would be; for example, which part of the District it should be in and whether it should be located close to the A303, particularly in light of the proposed improvements.

Options for the Distribution of Housing Growth

- 5.32 Based on the issues discussed above there are a number of options available to the Council as to how housing growth is distributed going forward, including carrying on with the same distribution strategy it has currently.

Question 5.2

Which of the following options for the distribution of housing growth do you think should be taken forward through the LPR?

Option 5.2

- 5.2(a)** Continue with the existing Local Plan spatial distribution of growth: Yeovil 47%, Market Towns 32%, Rural Centres 7% and Rural Settlements 14%.
- 5.2(b)** Have a more dispersed strategy based upon where the market is delivering.
- 5.2(c)** Introduce an additional tier of 'Village' settlements where development could be allocated. Which settlements should be identified and why?
- 5.2(d)** Allocate a Garden Town or Village. Where should it be located and how many homes should it accommodate?
- 5.2 (e)** Another option (please specify)

Question 5.3

Should the supporting text to Policy SS2 (Rural Settlements) be amended to ensure growth is focussed towards the more sustainable Rural Settlements?

Option 5.3

5.3(a) Amend the supporting text of Policy SS2 to require a Rural Settlement to have three of the services listed in Local Plan paragraph 5.41 in order for the Policy to apply.

5.3(b) Amend the list of services in Local Plan paragraph 5.41 by combining the faith facility with village hall/community centre and the post office with the convenience shop and continue the requirement two facilities.

5.3(c) An alternative option?

Future Employment Growth

5.33 As with housing delivery, monitoring indicates that employment land is not being delivered at the rate required to meet the Local Plan target of 149.5 hectares by 2026. Fifty-four hectares of net additional land has been delivered since 2006, which represents only 36% of the target⁴⁷.

5.34 At a settlement level, Figure 5.5 sets out the amount of employment land and floorspace that has been completed from 2006 to 2017⁴⁸.

Figure 5.5: New Employment Land and Floorspace (net) “Completions” only (2006 -2017)

Settlement	Local Plan Employment Land Requirement	Total Employment Land Completions (net figures)	Additional Floorspace Completed (net figures)
Yeovil	50.00	2.85	25,037
Chard	17.14	-0.19	24,432
Crewkerne	10.10	1.31	3,513
Ilminster	23.05	4.03	15,647
Wincanton	7.94	1.40	11,400
Somerton	6.63	8.91	16,313
Ansford & Castle Cary	18.97	8.91	16,313
Langport & Huish Episcopi	4.01	0.04	1,325
Bruton	3.06	0.21	2,933
Ilchester	1.02	-0.02	1,160
Martock & Bower Hinton	3.19	0	-278
Milborne Port	0.84	-3.79	-7,709
South Petherton	2.47	2.95	10,346
Stoke Sub Hamdon	1.09	-0.01	222
Rest of the District	n/a	35.24	96,679
Total	149.51	54.10	210,684

5.35 The current Local Plan strategy seeks to deliver employment land in the main settlements because they are perceived to be more sustainable. Major employment development is directed towards large scale, strategic employment sites in Yeovil, Chard, Ilminster, and Crewkerne, either through saved Local Plan policies or Policy

⁴⁷ Economic Development Monitoring Report April 2017

⁴⁸ South Somerset's Employment Monitoring Database, completions 1.04.06 to 31.03.17

EP1 (Strategic Employment Sites). Policy SS3 (Delivering New Employment Land) identifies the additional levels of new employment land required in other named settlements around the District.

- 5.36 The vast majority of land and floorspace has been delivered in locations substantially different to the policy aims of the current Local Plan. Whilst the Local Plan has sought to deliver employment land in the main settlements, the locations outside of these settlements, identified as the “Rest of the District” is where the delivery has occurred. Thirty-five hectares or 65% of the land that has been delivered is in the Rest of the District, away from allocated sites.
- 5.37 It is clear from land and floorspace delivery rates that the relationship between net additional land and net additional floorspace is not directly proportional. At a settlement-level, there are places experiencing little net gain in land, but relatively high levels of net additional floorspace. This indicates that expansion of existing premises, changes of use within existing buildings, and the intensification of use on existing sites are playing an important role in driving economic activity and job creation, as much, if not more so, than delivering new land for economic development. The link between jobs, land, and floorspace is also complex and not easily traced, as was intended in the current Local Plan.
- 5.38 Commentary relating to economic development delivery in specific settlements is provided in the relevant sections.
- 5.39 Economic forecasts⁴⁹ suggest that over the Plan period, there will be 8,500 net additional jobs in South Somerset to 2034. This is a lower rate than that envisaged in the current Local Plan (Policy SS3 stated that 11,250 jobs would be supported between 2006 and 2028) and can be explained by changes in the economic outlook of the UK following Brexit and a constrained labour market (low unemployment rates and an increase in the number of economically active retirees).
- 5.40 This additional job creation will be spread across a wide range of sectors, or for planning purposes, use classes and none (meaning homeworkers or people such as construction workers who require no fixed place of employment). A substantial number of jobs will be created in town centre activities, health, and education and leisure activities. There is a mixed picture in the traditional manufacturing sector.
- 5.41 Jobs growth by sector/use class is forecast as below (all figures are approximates):
- 2000 jobs in the A Use Classes (Shops and other main town centre activities such as cafes and restaurants);
 - 1,000 in the B Use Classes (this includes growth in B1 offices, modest growth in B8 storage and distribution and a substantial loss of B2 general industrial);
 - 1,700 in the C Use Class; (including hotels, hospitals and nursing homes and residential training centres);
 - 1,400 in the D Use Classes; (includes health, education and leisure activities);
 - 500 in the Sui Generis class (uses which do not fall into a class such as nightclubs or casinos); and
 - 1,900 in non-site-based activities, such as construction workers or home-workers.

⁴⁹ South Somerset Employment Land Evidence: Long term Economic Forecasting and Implications for Employment Sites and premises (May 2017)

- 5.42 A large proportion of these new jobs will not require any direct provision of sites or premises as they will use existing ones; others will be supported through specific infrastructure projects or town centre schemes. Within the B Use Classes however, land will be required for the anticipated growth in office space, although modest amounts, as South Somerset is not an office based economy. Also, despite the forecast decline in the general industrial sector, there will be some additional requirement, plus the need to replace existing aged stock, which there are large amounts of. This would equate to: 3-8 hectares of land for office development (B1 uses), and 42-85 hectares of land for industrial development (B2 & B8 uses). Additional evidence base work will be required to establish exact requirements between these two ranges.
- 5.43 The current Local Plan is seeking 149.51 hectares of employment land to 2028, of which only 54.1 ha has been completed, with 17.04 ha under construction (a total of 71.14 ha), leaving an outstanding requirement of 78.36 ha. These latest estimates of job growth therefore appear to require less land than the current Local Plan anticipates.
- 5.44 As Figure 5.5 demonstrates, much of the employment land and floorspace that has been completed is not on strategically designated sites, nor in the other locations set out in Policy SS3. This raises two principal issues:
- It may be appropriate to re-assess the overall scale of employment land set out in Policy SS3.
 - It is possible that the District Council needs to reconsider its approach in focussing its economic development strategy on the five large towns. It is questionable whether the allocated sites will bring forward the previously expected employment activities; therefore is it necessary to implement a policy that recognises opportunities across the rest of the District. For example by deallocating employment sites and enabling the expansion of established employment locations in the “Rest of the District” or identifying new locations in accessible locations such as along the A303 transport corridor.

Question 5.4

Are there any other appropriate locations where new employment development could be directed and if so, where, how much and of what type?

Question 5.5

Should the District Council reduce the amount of employment land required to be delivered within the Local Plan period and if so how much of the currently allocated land should be removed and from what locations?

Employment Issues – Monitoring

- 5.45 The current focus of monitoring the success of the economic/employment policies in the Local Plan is to analyse the amount of additional employment land and new jobs generated over the Plan period on a settlement by settlement basis.
- 5.46 There are inherent problems in analysing the economy in this way. Looking at the amount of land that has been developed, one might consider that the Local Plan is failing to support businesses, but considering Figure 5.6⁵⁰ below which summarises the change in Gross Value Added (which is a local measure of the productivity of an economy) in South Somerset between 2001 and 2015, a different picture emerges.

Figure 5.6: Gross Value Added in South Somerset between 2001 and 2015

Year	GVA (£m, 2011 prices)
2001	2,391.72
2006	2,933.72
2009	2,871.41
2015	3,134.57
% Change 2001 to 2015	31.06

- 5.47 What the table shows is that productivity has, on the whole, risen (although there have been variations between sectors) and that the economy of South Somerset is clearly growing. This is reflective of economic development efforts to improve productivity levels in the economy at a regional level (through the Local Economic Partnership – Heart of the South West) and county and district level.
- 5.48 A strong and prosperous economy depends on more than the amount of land or floorspace delivered. It is one where a major proportion of the local population is economically active, unemployment is low, workers and business are raising their productivity, employees are more highly skilled, and the overall number of jobs and businesses is increasing in the area. Local authorities are however required to plan proactively to meet the development needs of business and the success of the Local Plan needs to be measured.
- 5.49 The Local Plan has always focused on monitoring the delivery of land in “*traditional*” employment uses – Use Classes B1 (Business), B2 (General Industrial), and B8 (Storage and Distribution). Other employment land generating uses have, in the past, been considered by analysing town centre development and planned infrastructure investment (for example the delivery of new schools). There has therefore been little consolidated analysis of the full range of economic development uses that require land in South Somerset. The most recent analysis of data⁵¹ has sought to resolve this by considering a much wider range of economic development activities (outside the “*traditional*” employment uses) and includes for example, food and drink establishments, hotels, and sui generis uses.
- 5.50 Efforts to capture jobs growth at a settlement level have been mixed; jobs are measured through a number of different, non-comparable and often volatile datasets,

⁵⁰ Oxford Economics (from Heart of the South West LEP)

⁵¹ Economic Development Monitoring Report April 2017

which are frequently not available at a settlement level. The link between the delivery of land and job creation is also not proportional.

- 5.51 In monitoring the effectiveness of Policy SS3, there is an issue over whether measuring performance of the Local Plan in promoting economic growth via analysing the amount of net additional land developed is the correct approach. Consideration could be given to a package of monitoring measures which provide a more rounded and more comprehensive assessment of how South Somerset's economy is performing.
- 5.52 Given the inherent difficulties in monitoring annual jobs growth at a settlement level, and the level of accuracy regarding jobs provision in current Policy SS3 (that cannot be delivered), consideration should also be given to monitoring jobs growth at a District-wide level. The purpose of the Local Plan is to support economic growth and measuring overall growth at a District-wide level would allow this aim to be monitored sufficiently.

Question 5.6

What would be the most appropriate and quantifiable criteria or combination of criteria that should be monitored to measure performance of the Local Plan in promoting economic growth?

Question 5.7

Should the Local Plan remove the jobs growth figures by settlement in Policy SS3 and provide a District-wide figure to be monitored instead?

Infrastructure Delivery

- 5.53 Local Plan Policy SS6 (Infrastructure Delivery) outlines the Council's approach to infrastructure delivery.
- 5.54 The Infrastructure Delivery Plan Update 2015/16 (IDP) identifies the infrastructure requirements to support the growth in the Local Plan. It is a 'living' document and will be subject to further updates⁵².
- 5.55 The Council has adopted a Community Infrastructure Levy and this came into effect on 1 April 2017⁵³. Planning applications are liable to pay CIL for:
- The creation of new dwellings. With the exception of sites within the large urban extensions proposed in Yeovil and Chard.

⁵² <https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/early-review-of-local-plan-2006-2028/evidence-base/> Page includes links to the IDP parts 1 and 2 as well as the Appendices.

⁵³ CIL information and forms: [https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-permission/community-infrastructure-levy-\(cil\)/](https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-permission/community-infrastructure-levy-(cil)/)

- Applications for large out of town retail development (use class A1).
- 5.56 Additional infrastructure is likely to be needed to support the extra growth identified in the LPR; this could include and is not exclusively limited to: new highway infrastructure, education provision, health provision or improved open space, sports facilities and play areas.

Question 5.8

What additional infrastructure would be required to support the provision of the additional new homes and economic development?

Phasing of Development and Previously Developed Land

- 5.57 Local Plan Policy SS7 (Phasing of Previously Developed Land) encourages 40% of new housing development to be on Previously Developed Land (PDL) and notes that a five-year supply of housing land needs to pertain.
- 5.58 Policy HG2 (The Use of Previously Developed Land for New Housing Development) also states that the Council's intention is to seek to provide 40% of new dwellings on previously developed land (PDL) over the Plan period.
- 5.59 PDL is defined in the NPPF⁵⁴ and is often referred to as 'brownfield' land. Paragraph 47 requires LPAs to have a five-year supply of housing land and paragraph 111 expects planning policies to "...encourage..." the use of PDL and suggests LPAs may consider setting a local target.
- 5.60 In April 2017, legislation⁵⁵ came into force requiring LPAs to put in place Brownfield Land Registers (BLR). This has to be done by 31 December 2017.
- 5.61 The Register is in two parts and inclusion of a site within Part 2 of the BLR means that the site is given Permission in Principle (PiP)⁵⁶.
- 5.62 The Government has introduced the BLR and PiP to try and speed up housing delivery on brownfield land. This also builds upon the approach taken in the NPPF which encourages the effective use of brownfield land⁵⁷. The issue is discussed in the Housing White Paper.⁵⁸
- 5.63 The AMR shows that Policy SS7 has been used on only limited occasions⁵⁹. Local Plan policies are not expected to repeat national guidance and the LPR presents the opportunity to consider if Policies SS7 and HG2 can be rationalised into one.

⁵⁴ NPPF, 2012, Annex 2: Glossary

⁵⁵ The Town and Country Planning (Brownfield Land Register) Regulations 2017

⁵⁶ The Town and Country Planning (Permission in Principle) Order 2017

⁵⁷ NPPF, 2012 (paragraph 111)

⁵⁸ Fixing our broken housing market, February 2017

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/590464/Fixing_our_broken_housing_market_-_print_ready_version.pdf

⁵⁹ South Somerset Authority Monitoring Report, September 2017

Question 5.9

Which of the following options do you think would best address previously developed land?

Option 5.9

- 5.9(a)** Retain both Policy SS7 and Policy HG2 with no changes.
- 5.9(b)** Combine Policies SS7 and HG2 into one, but do not include the reference to the need to have a five-year housing land supply.
- 5.9(c)** Another option (please specify).

6. Yeovil

Spatial Portrait

- 6.1 Yeovil is by far the largest settlement in South Somerset, and is the focus for employment, retail, services and housing in South Somerset. It is located on the south eastern boundary of Somerset, adjacent to the Dorset border and is surrounded by a rural hinterland of smaller market towns and villages.
- 6.2 Yeovil is closely linked to the A303 trunk road which runs east-west through the District. The A30 and A37 run through the town. There are two mainline railway stations, Yeovil Pen Mill on the Weymouth-Bristol line and Yeovil Junction on the Exeter-London Waterloo line. Neither station is ideally located, Pen Mill is on the eastern edge of the settlement and Yeovil Junction is located two miles to the south. However, there is a regular bus service from the stations to the town centre and Pen Mill has good pedestrian and cycle links to the town centre via an off road path.
- 6.3 Yeovil plays a significant economic role in the County and is the prime economic driver for South Somerset. The town is the heart of aerospace research, design and manufacture in Somerset, with a long history of aircraft manufacture dating back over 100 years. For context, it has 21 times the concentration of employment in aerospace than the national average and consequently there are a high proportion of manufacturing jobs in the town. There are also many jobs in health and social work and retail in the town but the town is under-represented in private sector services such as banking and finance. The town has high levels of self-containment and also high levels of in-commuting.
- 6.4 Yeovil has a range of food and non-food shops, with numerous national multiple operators. Some of the key services and cultural activities in the town include Yeovil District Hospital, Yeovil College, the Octagon Theatre, Yeovil Town Football Club, and the newly refurbished Westland Leisure Complex.
- 6.5 Some the core town centre functions of Yeovil are currently located elsewhere in the town. For example many offices including the Yeovil Innovation Centre and South Somerset District Council's main office are now located outside of the town centre.
- 6.6 The car currently dominates travel with over 40%⁶⁰ of people travelling to work by car or van. So whilst lots of people who live in Yeovil also work in Yeovil, they do not walk, cycle, or use public transport to commute. Therefore, key traffic routes across the town suffer from congestion at peak times. The A30 Sherborne Road is one location where congestion is visible most of the day⁶¹.
- 6.7 Yeovil is located in an attractive rural setting, within sensitive landscape defined by escarpments to both the north and south. There is a rich historic environment in close proximity to the town, including registered Historic Parks and Gardens, village Conservation Areas and Scheduled Ancient Monuments. Much of the town is

⁶⁰ Census, 2011

⁶¹ Yeovil Transport Strategy Review, 2006

surrounded by best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land. There are several local wildlife sites and European protected species. The River Yeo flood plain runs along the eastern edge of the town. The Nine Springs Country Park just to the south of the town centre is a key asset and like much of the historic and natural environment provides tourism opportunities.

Housing Issues in Yeovil

- 6.8 The Local Plan proposes 7,441 new homes at Yeovil: 1,565 located within the Sustainable Urban Extensions and the remainder in the Urban Framework. This is captured in Policy YV1 (Urban Framework and Greenfield Housing for Yeovil).
- 6.9 In accordance with Local Plan Policy YV2 (Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extensions), outline planning applications have been submitted for 800 dwellings, land for economic development and associated infrastructure at Keyford (south area) and for 765 dwellings, land for economic development and associated infrastructure at Upper Mudford, Primrose Lane (north area)⁶². Council officers are working closely with developers and local communities to achieve high quality sustainable schemes.
- 6.10 Local Plan Policy YV3 (Yeovil Summerhouse Village) proposes an “urban village” to deliver at least 278⁶³ dwellings on land between Stars Lane, Park Street/South Street, and Dodham Brook in Yeovil town centre. There are viability issues associated with the delivery of this proposal and its feasibility will be addressed as part of the Yeovil Urban Regeneration Framework Refresh project, which is discussed further in the Yeovil Town Centre section below.
- 6.11 Over the plan period so far, housing delivery at Yeovil has been below the annualised housing target⁶⁴. The position as at 31/03/17 is set out below:

Figure 6.1: Housing Completions and Commitments

	Dwellings
Net Completions (01/04/06 to 31/03/17)	2,385
Existing Commitments (as at 31/03/17)	1,361
Total	3,746

Source: SSDC Monitoring Database

- 6.12 More positively, the Wyndham Park, Lufton, and Brimsmore key sites are progressing; and the planning applications are in for the Sustainable Urban Extensions. The regeneration projects to be identified as part of the Yeovil Refresh will include some residential development and this will contribute towards boosting the housing supply within the urban framework.

Employment Issues in Yeovil

- 6.13 The Local Plan supports Yeovil’s role as the prime economic driver in South Somerset as well as parts of surrounding districts. Policy SS3 (Delivering New

⁶² Upper Mudford, Primrose Lane: 14/02554/OUT and Keyford: 15/01000/OUT

⁶³ An initial phase on 150 dwellings.

⁶⁴ South Somerset Authority Monitoring Report, September 2017

Employment Land) sets a target of 44.84 ha of land and 3,948 jobs for economic development plus a further 5.16 ha and 1,565 jobs in the Sustainable Urban Extensions.

- 6.14 Yeovil has delivered the most employment land in gross terms (12.58 hectares) of all the settlements in the District but once losses have been taken into account (9.73 hectares) this figure falls to just under 3 hectares (2.85ha). Policy SS3 of the Local Plan is focused on net, new employment land delivery, and so the 2.85 hectares is somewhat off the target for Yeovil. However, the gross land delivery figure should be borne in mind when reflecting on what is happening in the settlement, and it demonstrates that the town is clearly capable of realising a reasonable level of new employment land. But, what the data is also showing is that other changes are occurring in the town, with high levels of existing employment land being lost to other uses, and changes of use generating net additional floorspace but without necessarily requiring new land.
- 6.15 Given that Yeovil is the largest urban area in the District, it is expected that there will be a degree of replacement, churn and loss as older buildings and premises become obsolete and new land/buildings are developed. To some extent, this represents the natural cycle of stock upgrades and replacement seen within all urban areas. The majority of losses have been to residential use.
- 6.16 Three employment allocations were carried forward from the old Local Plan (1991-2006) into the adopted Plan. These are ME/YEOV/4 Land south of Yeovil Airfield, ME/WECO/1 Land off Bunford Lane and the employment element of the Lufton Key Site, KS/BRYM/1, known as Lufton 2000. They all have planning permissions in place for employment development.
- 6.17 Figure 6.2 summarises the position as at 31 March 2017.

Figure 6.2: Yeovil Economic Development as at 31 March 2017

	Land (Hectares) (Net)	Floorspace (Square Metres) (Net)
Complete	2.85	25,037
Under Construction	1.90	-124
Not Yet Started	23.63	56,683
Total	28.38	81,596
Local Plan Requirement	50.00	
Residual Requirement	21.62	

Source: SSDC Monitoring Database

- 6.18 The Local Plan Inspector agreed with the approach of having two larger urban extensions rather than a more dispersed approach to development around Yeovil⁶⁵. However, given the constraints around the town the options for further growth become more challenging to identify.

⁶⁵ https://www.southsomeset.gov.uk/media/700388/south_somerset_lp_final_report.pdf

- 6.19 The emerging East Coker Neighbourhood Plan has reached the Pre-submission consultation and publicity stage (Regulation 14)⁶⁶. The neighbourhood area includes the whole of the parish of East Coker which extends into the southern edge of Yeovil, where there are sites included in the following Options for Growth. The emerging Plan currently seeks to limit the number of dwellings in the Parish excluding the Keyford Sustainable Urban Extension to 65 dwellings over the period 2011-2028. The District Council has formally responded during the consultation period.

Options for Growth

- 6.20 Having assessed the evidence base, a number of options for housing and employment growth at Yeovil have been identified.

Figure 6.3: Options for Housing and Employment Growth at Yeovil

Option	Location	Comments / Constraints
YEO 1	Land north of Oak Farm	<p>This option includes the HELAA site S/BRYM/0001/C and land to the east, which is not part of the HELAA but has been included as part of the option for a more comprehensive scheme. The availability of the additional land to the east is unknown.</p> <p>The site is detached from other residential development but close to existing employment land.</p> <p>The Peripheral Landscape Study – Yeovil⁶⁷ identifies the land as having a moderate capacity to accommodate built development.</p> <p>The option is located within BMV agricultural land.</p> <p>It may be challenging to get an appropriate access.</p> <p>As a mixed use development this site could accommodate around 3.37 hectares of land for economic development and 170 dwellings.</p>
YEO 2	Land adjacent Yeovil Town Football Club	<p>Planning application 15/03513/OUT is pending for the construction of a mixed use development (comprising A1, A3, C1, C3, D1 and D2 uses).</p> <p>Development of this site would be subject to the re-provision of the public open space. Around 10 residential units are proposed.</p>

⁶⁶ The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 as amended

⁶⁷ Peripheral Landscape Study – Yeovil, 2008, Figure 5 :

https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/321353/peripheral%20landscape%20study_yeovil%20figure%205_landscape%20capacity.pdf

YEO 3	Land at Brimsmore	<p>This option combines two HELAA sites around Brimsmore House and fruit farm (S/YEWI/0001 and 0003).</p> <p>The Peripheral Landscape Study identifies the land as having a moderate-low capacity to accommodate built development.</p> <p>The option is located within BMV agricultural land.</p> <p>The southern part of the site adjoins the curtilage of listed Brimsmore House.</p> <p>Whilst the site was promoted for mixed use it is considered that it is too divorced from the rest of the settlement for economic development uses.</p> <p>The site could accommodate around 200 dwellings.</p>
YEO 4	Land at Marshes Hill Farm and at the junction of Combe Street Lane and A37	<p>This option combines the southern portions of two HELAA sites (S/YEWI/0006 and 0007).</p> <p>The Peripheral Landscape Study identifies the land as having a moderate-low capacity to accommodate built development.</p> <p>The option is located within BMV agricultural land.</p> <p>The site could accommodate around 50 dwellings.</p>
YEO 5	Land north of Mudford Road	<p>This option combines the two small areas to the south of two much larger HELAA sites (S/YEWI/0004 and E/MUDF/0004).</p> <p>The Peripheral Landscape Study identifies the land as having moderate to low and low capacity to accommodate built development.</p> <p>The site is partially within a Mineral Safeguarding Area.</p> <p>The option is located within BMV agricultural land.</p> <p>The site could accommodate around 60 dwellings.</p>
YEO 6	Land at Key Farm, Dorchester Road	<p>This option would form a southern extension to the Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extension – south area which is currently the subject of a planning application. The option consists of the northern part of the larger HELAA site S/EACO/0022 and a small southern portion of S/EACO/0024.</p> <p>There is a County Geological Site located within the option. The listed buildings at Key Farm adjoin the site to the south east corner.</p>

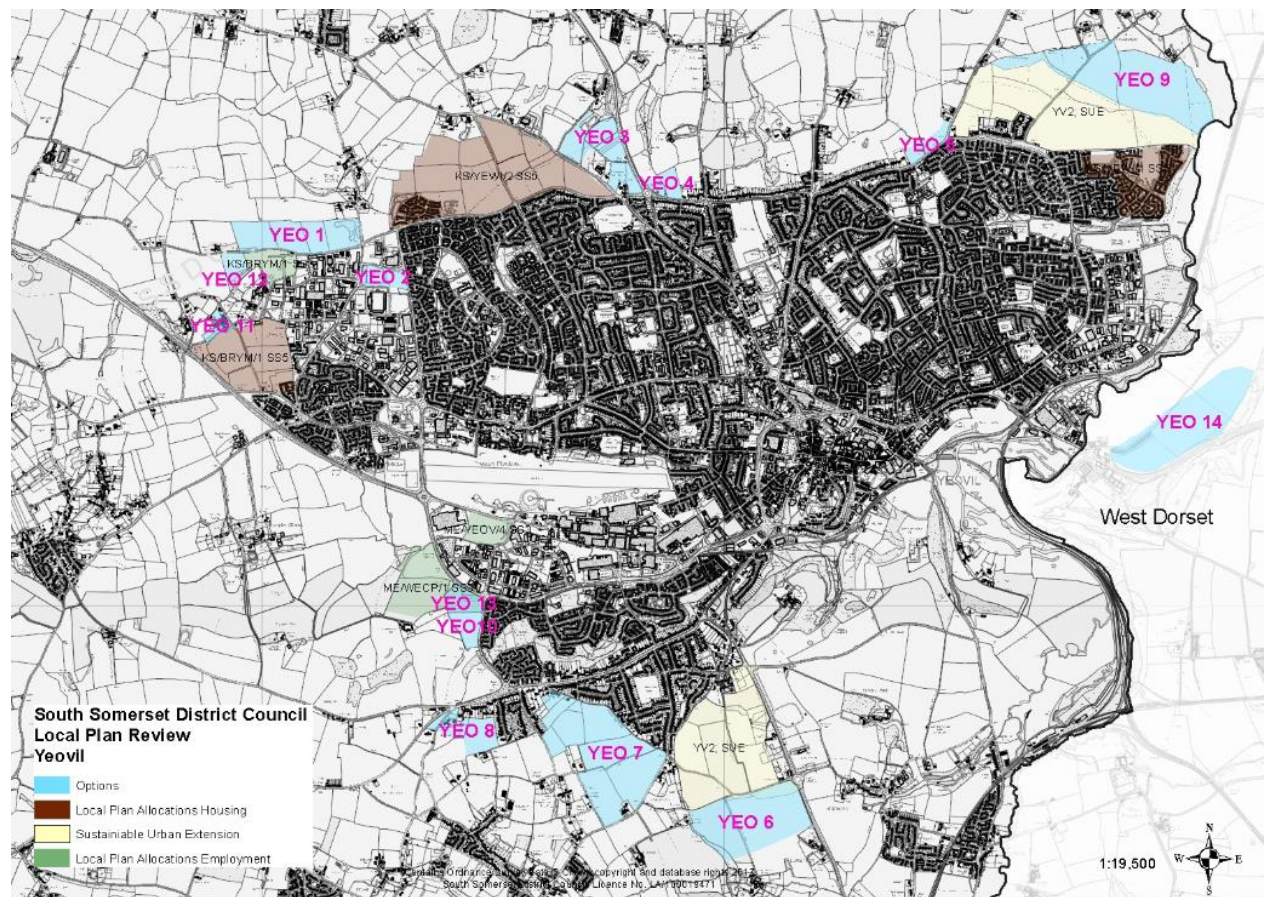
		<p>A Roman Villa, a scheduled ancient monument, is located close to the north-western corner of the option.</p> <p>There are rights of way across the land.</p> <p>The option is located within BMV agricultural land and is outside but adjoins an area of Flood Zone 3.</p> <p>The site could accommodate around 460 dwellings.</p>
YEO 7	Land at Greggs Riding School and land off Sandhurst Road and Gunville Lane	<p>This option combines two HELAA sites the northern part of the site consists of Greggs Riding School (S/EACO/0020). This land is identified as having a moderate to low capacity to accommodate development in the peripheral landscape study and is BMV agricultural land. Protected Species are in evidence – brown long eared bat and there is a right of way across the land. In isolation this site is difficult to access and would involve the incorporation of existing properties as part of the scheme and a new junction from West Coker Road.</p> <p>The land to the south (S/EACO/0003) is identified in the Peripheral Landscape Study as having a moderate-high and moderate capacity to accommodate built development. This part of the site is also BMV agricultural land.</p> <p>A Roman Villa, a scheduled ancient monument, is located very close to the south east of the site on the eastern side of the A37.</p> <p>There are rights of way across the land.</p> <p>The site could accommodate around 500 - 600 dwellings.</p>
YEO 8	Land at White Post / Yeovil Court	<p>This option combines part of HELAA site S/EACO/0004 in addition to adjacent land to the east and west where there is believed to be developer interest.</p> <p>The inclusion of the adjacent land could provide the opportunity to create a new access from West Coker Road.</p> <p>The Peripheral Landscape Study identifies the land as having a moderate-high capacity to accommodate built development. Ancient Woodland is within a 500m buffer.</p> <p>The site could accommodate around 130 dwellings.</p>

YEO 9	Extension of Yeovil North East urban extension.	<p>This option is an extension of the Yeovil north east Sustainable Urban Extension.</p> <p>There are a number of heritage assets located close to the site including listed buildings and the medieval shrunken village of Up Mudford.</p> <p>A local wildlife site is located to the north.</p> <p>The Peripheral Landscape Study identifies the land as having a moderate and low capacity to accommodate built development.</p> <p>The site is located within BMV agricultural land.</p> <p>The site could accommodate around 680 dwellings.</p> <p>The site was not identified through the HELAA.</p>
YEO 10	Land at Bunford Hollow	<p>This option is located to the south of Local Plan allocation ME/WECO/1 and forms the eastern part of HELAA site S/WECO/0011.</p> <p>The site has been subject to pre-application public consultation for residential development of around 80 dwellings.</p> <p>The Peripheral Landscape Study identifies the land as having a moderate-high capacity to accommodate built development.</p> <p>The site is located within BMV agricultural land.</p>
YEO 11	Land at Dairy House Farm	<p>This option adjoins the Lufton Key Site and mainly consists of underused farm buildings.</p> <p>The Peripheral Landscape Study identifies the land as having a moderate-high capacity to accommodate built development.</p> <p>A narrow area of high flood risk extends along the river basin at the southern edge of the site.</p> <p>The site could accommodate around 35 dwellings.</p> <p>The site was not identified through the HELAA.</p>
YEO 12	Lufton 2000	<p>This option adjoins the economic development part of Local Plan allocation KS/BRYM/1 and has the potential to form an extension to Lufton 2000. It could compensate for the loss an area of employment land (see option 13 below).</p> <p>Any development on the western edge would need to</p>

		<p>respect the setting of Montacute House and parkland. The land is identified as having a moderate capacity to accommodate built development and consists of BMV agricultural land.</p> <p>The site could accommodate around 5 ha of employment land.</p>
YEO 13	Land part of allocation ME/WECO/1	<p>This option forms part of allocation ME/WECO/1. Whilst the land is allocated for employment use the option presents an opportunity to increase the overall housing land supply in Yeovil whilst providing compensatory employment land at option 12.</p> <p>The site could accommodate around 75 dwellings.</p>
YEO 14	Land at Babylon Hill –West Dorset District	<p>An option to develop in West Dorset was considered and ruled out when formulating the adopted Local Plan.</p> <p>The Joint Local Plan Review for West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Initial Issues and Option Consultation, February 2017, includes Option Y1 identified as having an indicative capacity for around 425 dwellings.⁶⁸</p> <p>South Somerset has objected to this option on the basis that it is an urban extension to Yeovil rather than West Dorset. There would be significant infrastructure costs associated with developing this site. It is located close to an area of flood risk and a Site Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). A transport assessment would be required to be undertaken to assess the impact of development on the highway network and in particular on Sherborne Road and surrounding area.</p> <p>If West Dorset pursues this option South Somerset District Council would seek to argue that a significant proportion, if not all, of the housing numbers should be counted towards meeting the housing need in South Somerset.</p>

⁶⁸ https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/media/219492/Local-Plan-Review-Issues-and-Options-Feb-2017/pdf/Issues_and_Options_FINAL_WITH_COVERsmaller.pdf

Figure 6.4: Yeovil Options



Question 6.1

Which of the following options do you think should be taken forward through the LPR?

Options 6.1

Options for growth at Yeovil include:

- 6.1(a)** YEO 1: Land north of Oak Farm for mixed use
- 6.1(b)** YEO 2: Land adjacent Yeovil Town Football Club for mixed use
- 6.1(c)** YEO 3: Land at Brimsmore for housing
- 6.1(d)** YEO 4: Land at Marshes Hill Farm and at the junction of Combe Street Lane and A37 for housing
- 6.1(e)** YEO 5: Land north of Mudford Road for housing
- 6.1(f)** YEO 6: Land at Key Farm, Dorchester Road for housing
- 6.1(g)** YEO 7: Land at Greggs Riding School and land off Sandhurst Road and Gunville Lane for housing
- 6.1(h)** YEO 8: Land at White Post / Yeovil Court for housing
- 6.1(i)** YEO 9: Extension of Yeovil North East Sustainable Urban Extension for housing
- 6.1(j)** YEO 10: Land at Watercombe Lane for housing
- 6.1(k)** YEO 11: Land at Dairy House Farm for housing
- 6.1(l)** YEO 12: Lufton 2000 for economic development
- 6.1(m)** YEO 13: Land part of allocation S/WECO/1 for housing
- 6.1(n)** YEO 14: Land at Babylon Hill –West Dorset District for housing
- 6.1(o)** Another option (please specify)

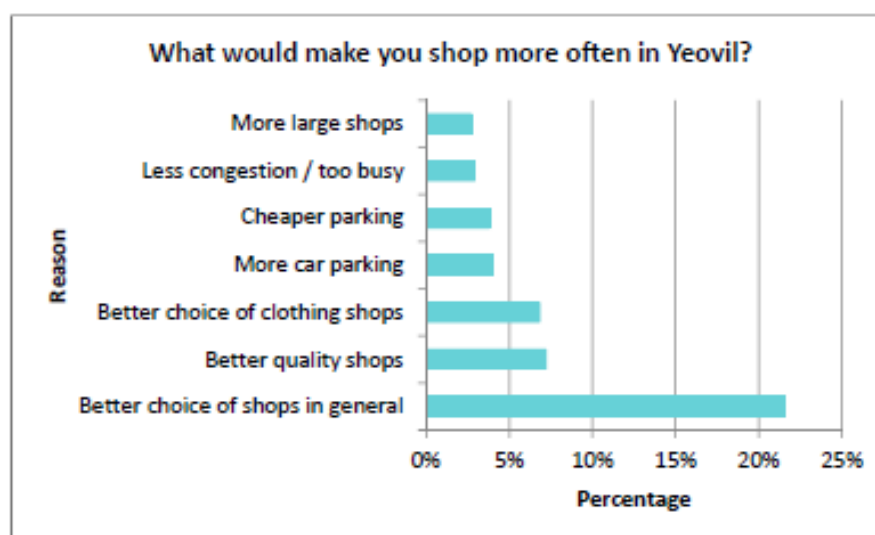
Yeovil Town Centre

- 6.21 Yeovil is the largest Town Centre in South Somerset. Food shopping (known as convenience goods) is spread throughout the town both within what is known as the defined Town Centre (identified in the adopted Local Plan Proposals Map) and outside, in other parts of the town. A total of £174.63 million in convenience goods expenditure was attracted to Yeovil in 2017, 48% of the total convenience goods spending attracted to the District. Of this spending, 31% was in the Town Centre and 69% in the rest of Yeovil. This isn't surprising as the majority of supermarkets are

located outside of the Town Centre and there continues to be pressure for this as the development industry believes there are no suitable, available and viable town centre sites to accommodate further growth in food shopping.

- 6.22 Comparison goods refer to durable goods such as clothing or footwear, in other words, non-food. The comparison goods expenditure attracted to Yeovil in 2017 totalled £392.35m, equivalent to 86% of the total comparison goods spending in the District as a whole. Food and beverage expenditure attracted to Yeovil is £90.86 million; 57% of the total attracted to the District⁶⁹.
- 6.23 By way of comparison with other town and city centres, Yeovil is ranked 160th by Venuescore (2016)⁷⁰, Taunton 90th, Bristol 13th, Bath 19th, and Exeter 22nd.
- 6.24 The household shopper survey carried out as part of the Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study⁷¹ indicates that Yeovil is the main destination for 35% of South Somerset shoppers for food shopping and 77% for non-food. When asked what would make respondents shop in Yeovil more often 51.5% stated 'nothing'. A better choice of shops in general is the improvement most would like to see. The following summarises the suggested improvements:

Figure 6.5: What would make you shop more in Yeovil?



Source: NEMS Market Research

⁶⁹ South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study, Lichfields 2017 (Appendix 5)

⁷⁰ VENUESCORE™ is an annual survey compiled by Javelin Group, which ranks the UK's top 3,500+ retail venues (including town centres, stand-alone malls, retail warehouse parks and factory outlet centres).

⁷¹ South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study, Lichfields 2017

6.25 Looking to the future, the retail floorspace capacity at Yeovil is as follows:

Figure 6.6: Projected Retail Floorspace Capacity in Yeovil (sq. m gross)

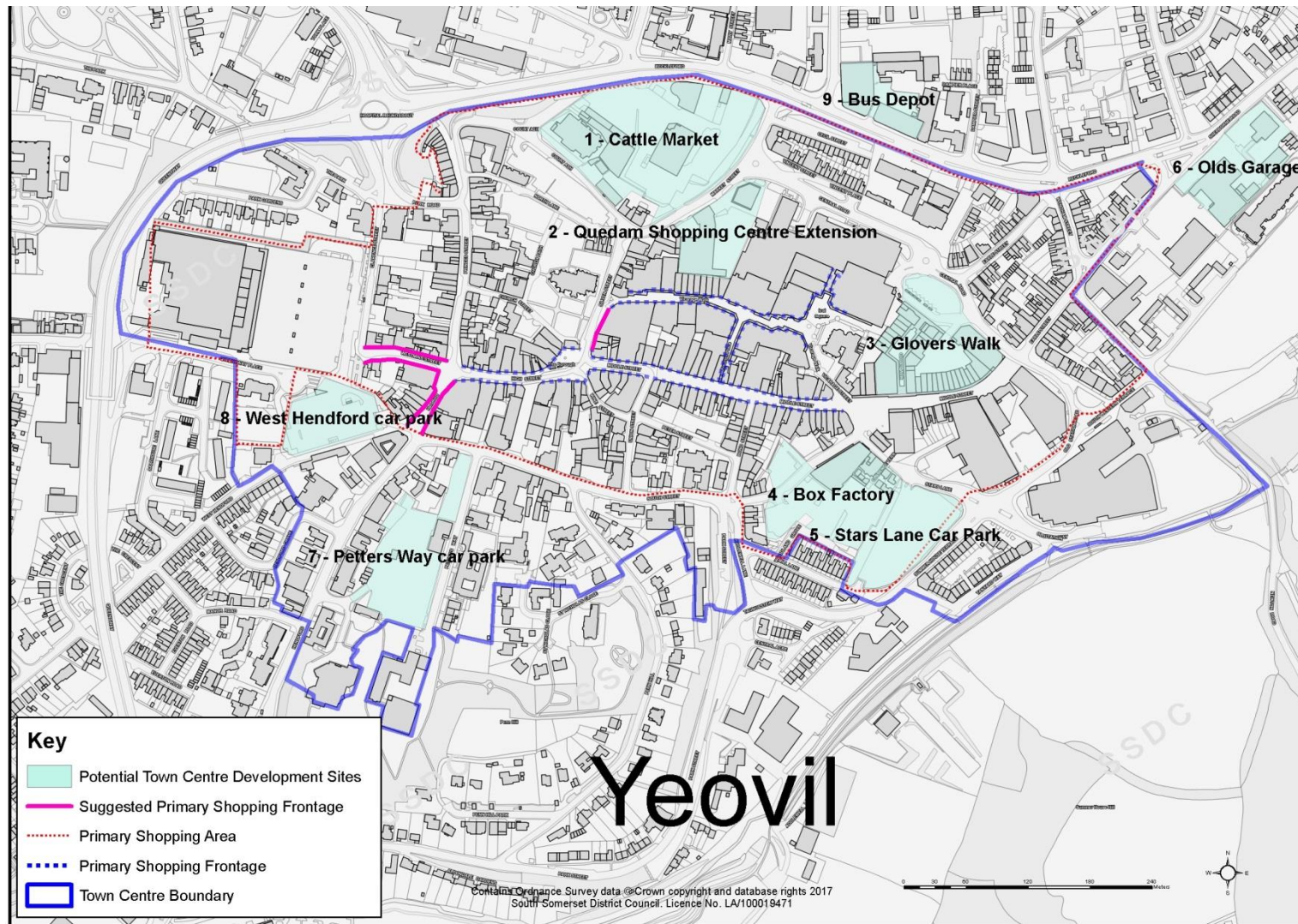
Type	By 2024	By 2029	By 2034 (Total capacity over Plan period)
Convenience	14	555	1,078
Comparison	5,755	13,561	21,508
Food and Beverage	502	1,489	2,452

Source: South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study, 2017

- 6.26 The vacant units in Yeovil town centre could accommodate some of this growth depending on the size and nature of available units and market demand.
- 6.27 The Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study does not recommend any change to the existing retail hierarchy. Yeovil is seen as having the best prospects for attracting investment from developers and multiple operators and should be the location for large-scale development serving a wider area. Policy EP10 (Convenience and Comparison Shopping in Yeovil) is addressed in Section 9 of this document.
- 6.28 The Yeovil Refresh project is currently underway. The regeneration projects in the Yeovil Urban Development Framework (2005) are being reviewed as part of this project. It focuses on investment and regeneration of development opportunities in the town centre including the Cattle Market, Stars Lane, and Box Factory sites.
- 6.29 Once the work has been completed it will shape the Council's approach to delivery of mix of uses in Yeovil Town Centre.
- 6.30 The South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study⁷² project identifies nine development opportunities within and on the edge of Yeovil Town Centre.

⁷² South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study, Lichfields, 2017

Figure 6.7: Development Opportunities within and adjoining Yeovil Town Centre



Source: South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study, 2017 (Revised version of plan)

- 6.31 The overall development potential of each site for town centre uses has been assessed in the Study and is considered to be as follows:
1. Cattle Market – Good
 2. Quedam Extension – Good
 3. Glovers Walk – Reasonable
 4. Box Factory – Good
 5. Stars Lane Car Park – Poor, due to loss of parking
 6. Olds Garage – Good
 7. Petters Way Car Park – Poor, due to loss of car parking
 8. West Hendford Car Park – Poor
 9. Bus Depot – Reasonable
- 6.32 Given pressure to develop outside of the Town Centre on cheaper sites, the Council could consider allocating one or a number of the above sites to clearly indicate the Council's vision for Yeovil and focus the development industry into the Town Centre where the overall benefits to the community are considered greater. The Yeovil Refresh Project will help determine, refine and prioritise regeneration projects going forward, which could potentially be allocations in the LPR.
- 6.33 Projects will include public realm improvements, residential, retail and other commercial development as well as highways infrastructure. There will be a separate consultation process for the project.

Question 6.2

Do you think the Council should allocate sites for retail and/or other forms of development in Yeovil Town Centre? If yes, please specify the site and the type of development.

Question 6.3

Do you have any comments on the development opportunities within and adjoining Yeovil Town Centre?

- 6.34 The South Somerset Retail and Town Centre Uses Study suggests that the Primary Shopping Frontages in Yeovil make up a relatively small part of the Town Centre. The non-designated frontages provide flexibility in use. Therefore, in order to give greater focus on town centre uses in certain locations, it is suggested that there is scope to extend the Primary Shopping Frontage along the pedestrianised part of Hendford and along Westminster Street. The potential extension of the designation is illustrated in Figure 6.7.

Question 6.4

Should the Primary Shopping Frontage for Yeovil be extended as shown in Figure 6.7?

Infrastructure

6.35 The Infrastructure Delivery Plan Update 2015/16⁷³ identifies a number of infrastructure requirements for Yeovil, these are summarised below:

Figure 6.8: Infrastructure Requirements for Yeovil

Infrastructure Type	Project
Highways	The Yeovil Eastern Corridor project ⁷⁴ proposes several improvements through the town centre and eastwards, and is being delivered incrementally using funding from developers and public finance (<i>Priority 1</i>).
	The Yeovil Western Corridor aims to increase the capacity of key junctions to the west of the town, as well as enhancing walking and cycling links (<i>Priority 1</i>). This is an £11 million scheme, fully funded through contributions from local development and the Heart of the South West Local Transport Board.
	<p>A number of other highway improvement works are planned as part of the delivery of the Key Sites and the two SUEs. Under the terms of the Section 106 Agreement signed for the Lyde Road Key Site, the following highway works are proposed and will be funded by developers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lyde Road / Sherborne Road – conversion of existing junction to a traffic light signal controlled junction (<i>Priority 1 - completed</i>);• Upgrade existing Lyde Road / Mudford Road junction to a traffic light signal controlled junction (<i>Priority 1</i>); and• Creation of a roundabout at the Combe Street Lane / Mudford Road junction (<i>Priority 1</i>).
	Significant road improvement schemes will be required in order to provide adequate access for the two SUEs. For the North-East SUE, a new roundabout is needed on Primrose Lane to allow access in to the west of the site (<i>Priority 1</i>). For the Southern SUE, a new fifth arm for the Keyford roundabout is required, and improvements to Little Tarratt Lane / A37 junction are also required (<i>Priority 1</i>).

⁷³ South Somerset Infrastructure Delivery Plan Update 2015/16, Part One – Spatial Summary, January 2016: https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/814403/idp_2015_16_part_1_issue.pdf

⁷⁴ Somerset County Council project for road improvements

	<p>There remain concerns over specific congestion hot-spots and poor traffic-flow along key routes (<i>Priority 1</i>), these include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A30 (Reckleford) and its relationship with access roads into and out of the town centre, such as Wyndham Street and Market Street; and • Access to key regeneration sites in the town centre, such as: the Cattle Market, Stars Lane/Box Factory, Glovers Walk, and the Quedam Extension.
Rail	<p>There is currently no southern rail link between Yeovil Junction and the southbound line (i.e. the so-called 'south chord' towards Dorchester). This limits both the potential to enhance services, and network resilience to extreme weather events. Options are being considered to address these issues, although some, such as more regular train frequencies on the Heart of Wessex line and a 'south chord', are not being considered until the long term.</p>
Bus	<p>The network suffers from a lack of connectivity in places. Sustainable travel schemes are being considered in order to promote connectivity with the SUEs. In addition, Local Plan Policy TA3 aspires to the creation of a sustainable transport interchange in the town, by seeking contributions toward this. Although there is potential to obtain funding from development, these projects are still to be fully worked up and are not yet funded (<i>Priority 2 and 3</i>).</p>
Flood Risk and Drainage	<p>The majority of flood risk and drainage problems relate to surface water and sewer flooding, with around 1,100 residential properties at risk of surface water flooding in the town. There are no Environment Agency (EA) maintained raised defences in Yeovil itself, but EA defences are in place nearby upstream at Barwick and Stoford. A Surface Water Management Plan for Yeovil to inform future development and drainage works is programmed to be prepared in 2015-17.</p>
Utilities	<p>In the short term, the Brimsmore key site needs to upgrade existing sewers, provide a new off-site mains sewer, and new booster station. Lufton key site needs to provide a new off-site sewer.</p> <p>In the medium term, the South Yeovil SUE should provide a new off-site sewer and new off-site mains (<i>Priority 1</i>). In addition, Pen Mill Sewage Treatment Works requires a detailed Strategic Enhancement Plan in order to inform future investment needs, with a treatment works scheme required in 2020-25 subject to growth and water quality objectives.</p> <p>The upgrading of the water supply grid will ensure sufficient capacity in Yeovil (<i>Priority 1</i>). This will be funded directly by Wessex Water and delivered in the short term (2018 – 2020).</p> <p>Off-site electrical and gas reinforcement works will be required for the South SUE, and these have been factored in by the developer in their planning application (<i>Priority 1</i>).</p>

Education	<p>In order to accommodate Local Plan growth, two new primary schools are required in the short term: one associated with the Lufton Key Site, and another associated with the North East SUE / Wyndham Park site (<i>Priority 1</i>). Two further new primary schools are required in the medium term: one at Brimsmore Key Site (<i>Priority 1</i>), and one associated with the South SUE (<i>Priority 2</i>).</p> <p>The Education Authority's latest position regarding secondary school provision at Yeovil is that by 2022 there will be some demand. They will be commencing work on a feasibility study in 2018. This will seek to establish potential additional capacity in the existing academies and if there is a need for a new school.</p>
Health care	<p>The Local Plan creates the opportunity for a new health centre in each of the two SUEs, estimated to be delivered in the medium to long term (<i>Priority 2</i>), reflected in the outline planning applications for the SUEs.</p> <p>Opportunities to provide integrated health care are being considered including Yeovil District Hospital's 'Symphony' project.</p> <p>NHS England and Somerset CCG are producing a high level Local Estates Strategy. This will fully assess existing health care capacity across South Somerset and will be used to inform any future needs. Initial indications suggest that provision in Yeovil will be highlighted as a priority.</p>
Other infrastructure	<p>New housing generates a need for additional open space and outdoor play space, sports, community and cultural facilities; although the timing of this has not been identified as fundamental to the delivery of planned development (<i>Priority 2 and Priority 3</i>).</p> <p>Some infrastructure has been identified as part of the overall 'offer' within strategic development sites, for example, a new community hall at Wyndham Park, a bike park at Birchfield Park (<i>both Priority 2</i>) and one new sports ground in the town (<i>Priority 3</i>).</p> <p>In addition, there is an aspiration for 40% green space at the SUEs in order to create a high quality urban edge landscape. A specialist strategic sports and recreation facility (Sports Zone) is sought in Yeovil to meet the needs of the whole District, as set out in Local Plan Policy HW2 (<i>Priority 3</i>).</p> <p>A variety of town centre public realm enhancements (identified in the Yeovil Urban Development Framework) are desirable (<i>Priority 3</i>).</p> <p>The future of Yeovil police station remains uncertain.</p> <p>The long-term future of the Yeovil fire station at Reckleford is subject to discussion given financial pressures experienced by the organisation (<i>Priority 3</i>).</p>

	The South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust has identified that a new ambulance station is required to replace the current one, although this has seen significant delays from the original target completion date of 2012 (<i>Priority 3</i>).
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Yeovil Airfield Flight Safety Zone

- 6.36 The Yeovil Airfield Flight Safety Zone is supported by Local Plan Policy YV4. It ensures that Leonardo is able to continue to use and operate safely their airfield in order to test and develop both civilian and military aircraft. No issues arise with regards to this policy.

Delivering Sustainable Travel at Yeovil

- 6.37 Policy YV5 (Delivering Sustainable Travel at the Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extensions) seeks to achieve 30% of travel from the urban extensions to be by non-car means. The measures within the Policy are based upon recommendations in the study 'Delivering 21st Century Sustainable Travel in Yeovil'⁷⁵. The Policy is specifically related to the urban extensions and will be used as part of the consideration of the current planning applications at Keyford and Up Mudford.

Question 6.5

In addition to the infrastructure described above, are there any other infrastructure requirements for Yeovil?

⁷⁵ Delivering 21st Century Sustainable Travel in Yeovil, Addison and Associates, 2011
https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/387058/reduced_delivering_sustainable_transport_in_the_21st_century_110519_.pdf

7. Market Towns

Current Approach

- 7.1 There are seven Market Towns in South Somerset; they are identified in current Local Plan Policy SS1 (Settlement Strategy). The Market Towns accommodate the bulk of the planned growth outside of Yeovil.
- 7.2 The seven settlements identified as Market Towns are Ansford & Castle Cary, Chard, Crewkerne, Ilminster, Langport & Huish Episcopi, Somerton, and Wincanton. Chard, Crewkerne, Ilminster, and Wincanton are identified as Primary Market Towns; the remaining three are Local Market Towns in recognition of their smaller role and function.

Primary Market Towns – Chard

Spatial Portrait

- 7.3 Chard is located in the west of South Somerset, close to the Devon and Dorset borders. Chard is South Somerset's second largest town, with a population of 13,074⁷⁶. It has a strong heritage of manufacturing and innovation and is closely linked to the A303 trunk road, the A30, and the A358.
- 7.4 The town is surrounded by attractive countryside and in particular the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) to the west and north.
- 7.5 The town's location close to the Devon border means it has a functional relationship with the market town of Axminster, where the nearest railway station is located.

Chard Eastern Development Area

- 7.6 The strategic approach to development at Chard is known as the Chard Regeneration Scheme and is underpinned by the Chard Regeneration Framework (CRF)⁷⁷, a set of documents that considers how the long-term growth and regeneration of the town should be directed. The CRF consists of four core documents that address future growth of the town:
- A Vision for Chard, September 2010;
 - The Chard Regeneration Plan, September 2010;
 - The Chard Implementation Plan, October 2011; and
 - The Strategic Transport Appraisal Report, 2010.
- 7.7 Local Plan Policy PMT1 (Chard Strategic Growth Area) and Policy PMT2 (Chard Phasing) cover the strategic growth of Chard and reflect the Chard Regeneration Plan. Growth is

⁷⁶ Census 2011, BUA

⁷⁷ <https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/business/the-economic-development-service/current-projectsschemes/chard-regeneration-scheme/>

focussed on the Chard Eastern Development Area (CEDA) and other areas of Chard including the Boden Mill site and the East End regeneration area.

- 7.8 Overall, Policy PMT1 sees at least 2,716 dwellings being delivered within and beyond the Plan period as well as 13 hectares of employment land, two primary schools, four neighbourhood centres, highway infrastructure and improvements, and sports and open space provision.
- 7.9 Policy PMT 2 expects at least 1,220 of the total number of dwellings in CEDA, 13ha of employment land, one new primary school, two neighbourhood centres and sports and open space provision to be delivered in the Plan period. The remainder of the growth is to be delivered post 2028.
- 7.10 It is considered that it is unnecessary to have two policies addressing the development of the CEDA and it would be more efficient to combine PMT1 and PMT2 into one policy.

Question 7.1

Do you agree that it would be more efficient to combine Policies PMT1 and PMT2 into one?

- 7.11 One of the key issues for the delivery of the growth at Chard is the capacity of the central Convent Link junction. The Strategic Transport Appraisal Report, 2010, identified that the junction was at or near capacity.
- 7.12 A Microprocessor Optimised Vehicle Actuation (MOVA) traffic light control system has since been put in place which has helped but not completely overcome the capacity issue. Currently Somerset Council as the Highway Authority is responding to planning applications on an individual basis using the applicants own transport assessments and so far proposals have not been prevented from coming forward on the basis of capacity at the junction. Road infrastructure at Chard is discussed in further detail under the "Infrastructure" heading of this section.
- 7.13 The Council is actively working towards the delivery of a viable scheme on the Boden Mill site.

Housing

- 7.14 Local Plan Policy SS5 (Delivering New Housing Growth) sets out that Chard should deliver 1,852 dwellings over the Plan period; this includes development within and outside of CEDA. Monitoring shows that so far delivery has been below the annualised housing target. However, more recently, planning permission has been granted or planning applications are pending for a number of proposals within the CEDA:

Figure 7.1: Planning Applications within CEDA

Application Reference	Site	Proposal	Status
16/02874/FUL	Land adjoining Holbear, Forton Road, Chard	323 dwellings and associated employment, community, and leisure uses, and accompanying infrastructure	Application pending
15/04772/OUT	Land Between Forton and Tatworth Road	200 dwellings and associated employment, community, and leisure uses, and accompanying infrastructure	Approved
15/02165/REM	Land off Oaklands Avenue, Chard	78 dwellings and associated access and highway infrastructure	Approved
Total	601 dwellings		

7.15 The overall position with regards to housing delivery in Chard is set out below.

Figure 7.2: Housing Completions and Commitments

	Dwellings
Net Completions (01/04/06 to 31/03/17)	655
Existing Commitments (as at 31/03/17)	201
Total	856

Source: SSDC Monitoring Database

- 7.16 The Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment, 2017, (HELAA)⁷⁸ identifies that over the next 10 years there is land with the potential to provide about 440 dwellings on suitable, available and achievable sites. These sites are located within CEDA and on the Boden Mill site in the Town Centre. Planning application 15/02165/REM for 78 dwellings was approved after the HELAA was finalised. Application site 16/02874/FUL for 323 dwellings is not included in the HELAA.
- 7.17 As already explained, the Council is committed to the delivery of the Chard Regeneration Scheme and is investing time and resources to the project. This approach has seen sites beginning to come forward.

⁷⁸ South Somerset Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment, 2017
<https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/early-review-of-local-plan-2006-2028/project-management--monitoring/south-somerset-housing-and-employment-land-availability-assessment/>

- 7.18 There has been pressure from developers to deliver in alternative locations and proposals to the north of Chard on land east of Crimchard and land east of Mount Hindrance have been refused planning permission and been dismissed at appeal⁷⁹. However, in his decision letter the Inspector makes it clear that the Council will be vulnerable to these types of proposal if it does not deliver its strategy for Chard based around Policies PMT1 and PMT2.
- 7.19 Given the Inspector's comments and the slow rate of delivery in Chard an alternative option which could potentially deliver growth in the shorter term would be to consider allocating land outside of CEDA whilst retaining the longer term commitment to delivering CEDA. This could mean that homes are delivered in the shorter term maintaining a supply to meet the community's needs whilst the CEDA development progresses over the longer term.
- 7.20 Figure 7.3 identifies an option for additional growth in Chard.

Figure 7.3: Option for Housing Growth at Chard

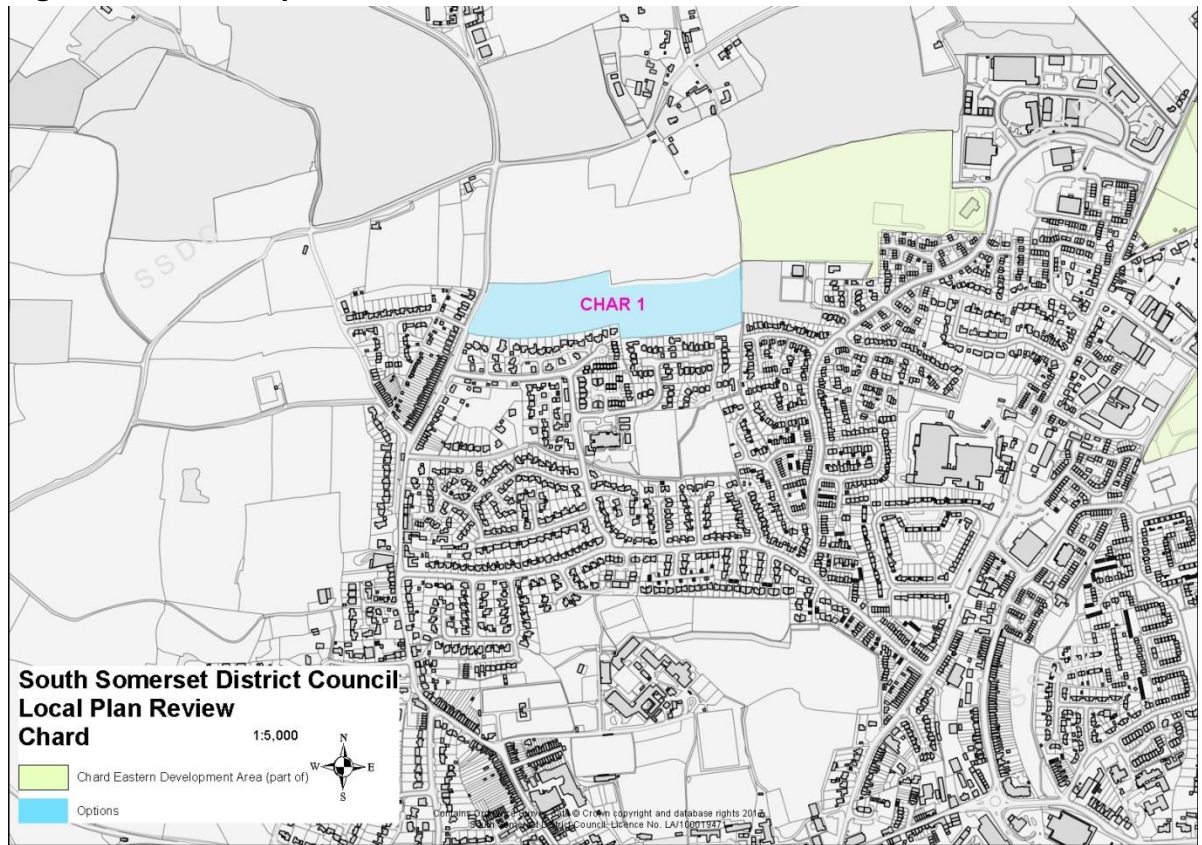
Option	Location	Comments / Constraints
CHAR 1	Land east of Crimchard	<p>This option includes the land that was the subject of planning application 13/01535/OUT: Land east of Crimchard. The proposal was for up to 110 dwellings.</p> <p>The application was refused and went to appeal. The Inspector did not accept the argument that the proposal would preclude further development of Chard by utilising existing infrastructure (traffic).</p> <p>The 'Peripheral Landscape Study – Chard'⁸⁰ identifies the site as having a high capacity to accommodate built development.</p> <p>The site is included in the Chard Regeneration Plan as part of Growth Option 4 'natural limits', however the Local Plan took forward Growth Option 3.</p>

⁷⁹ 13/01535/OUT: Land east of Crimchard – up to 110 dwellings and 12/04518/OUT: Land east of Mount Hindrance – mixed use including 350 dwellings and a new football pitch and associated infrastructure

⁸⁰ Peripheral Landscape Study – Chard, March 2008

https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/230787/peripheral%20landscape%20study_chard.pdf

Figure 7.4: Chard Options



Question 7.2

Which of the following options should be taken forward through the LPR?

Options 7.2

Options at for growth at Chard include:

- 7.2(a)** Continued commitment to the development of CEDA and Boden Mill redevelopment.
- 7.2(b)** Development at CHAR 1 and continued commitment to the development of CEDA and Boden Mill redevelopment.
- 7.2(c)** Another option (please specify).

Employment

- 7.21 Monitoring shows that whilst Chard has delivered a net loss in land since 2006, it has delivered the most amount of floorspace of any settlement in Area West. A significant amount of development relates to changes of use, from 'B' uses to Sui Generis. The majority of net floorspace delivered has been in the traditional industries (B uses) in Chard reflecting its key employers. Figure 7.5 summarises the position as at 31 March 2017.

Figure 7.5: Chard Economic Development as at 31 March 2017

	Land (Hectares) (Net)	Floorspace (Sq. m.) (Net)
Complete	-0.19	24,432
Under Construction	1.30	1,028
Not Yet Started	-1.15	-782
Total	-0.04	24,678
Local Plan Requirement	17.14	
Residual Requirement	17.14	

Source: SSDC Monitoring Database

- 7.22 The Local Plan strategy for employment delivery in Chard is currently failing. Whilst there are a number of sites in the Chard employment portfolio, they are all tied into the phasing of the Chard Regeneration Scheme and its associated infrastructure, which is potentially impacting on viability.
- 7.23 There are no employment sites identified in the HELAA but three sites are identified for mixed-use. One, which is the sewage treatment works, is not available and the other two are associated with the Chard Regeneration Scheme. W/CHAR/0019, land off Boden Street, is within Phase 1 of the scheme, the regeneration of the town centre, whilst and adjacent Paintmoor House (W/CHAR/0002) is part of phase 3a and 4b, which includes the northern link road between Oaklands Avenue and Furnham Road.
- 7.24 Given the Council's commitment to the delivery of the Chard Regeneration Scheme, as explained above, an approach to delivering employment land in the short term may be, as with housing, to take a look at identifying alternative sites, which would not only allow for the replacement premises which will be required but would offer a new alternative to support businesses in the shorter term. Given the lack of identified sites, the question would be where?

Question 7.3

Should a more proactive approach to employment land proposals be taken in locations outside of those identified in the Chard Regeneration Scheme? If yes, can you suggest locations for employment development?

Retailing

- 7.25 The Retail and Main Town Centres Uses Study⁸¹ identifies Chard as the second largest retail centre in the District. It has a good range of comparison and convenience shops anchored by Lidl, Sainsbury's and Co-op. It has a higher than average proportion of shops and town centre services but a relatively poor food and drink offer. Tesco, the main food store, is located in an edge-of-centre location.
- 7.26 Whilst Chard retains a high proportion of convenience goods expenditure, the expenditure on comparison goods is much less, with shoppers often preferring to go to Taunton.

Figure 7.6: Projected Retail Floorspace Capacity in Chard (sq. m. gross)

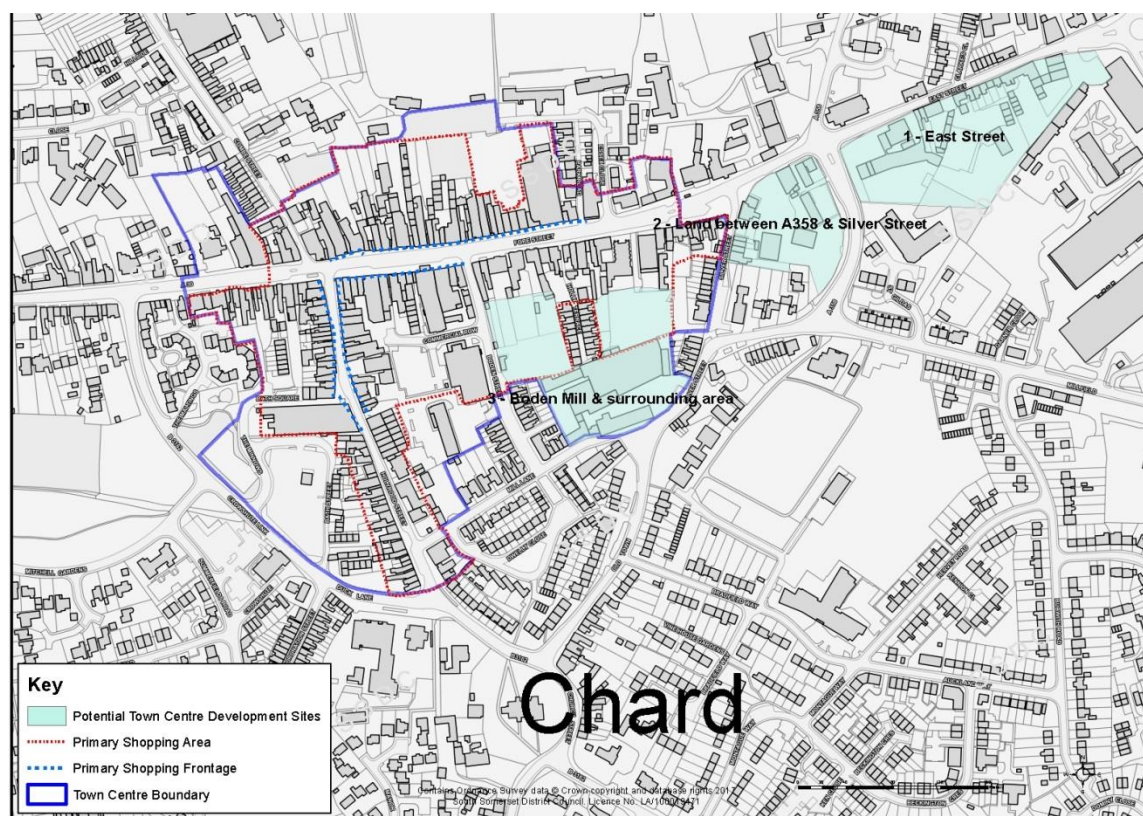
Type	By 2024	By 2029	By 2034 (Total capacity over Plan period)
Convenience	152	319	478
Comparison	264	616	974
Food and Beverage	70	197	320

Source: South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study, 2017

- 7.27 Vacant units within Chard Town Centre might accommodate some of the growth depending on the size and nature of the demand compared to the existing offer. The Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study identifies three opportunity sites within or on the edge of Chard Town Centre which may satisfy capacity:
1. East Street
 2. Land between A358 and Silver Street
 3. Boden Mill and surrounding area

⁸¹ South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study, Lichfields, 2017

Figure 7.7: Development Opportunities within and adjoining Chard Town Centre



Source: South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study, 2017

- 7.28 The East Street Regeneration Area includes the land between A358 and Silver Street area and is already identified on the proposals map as being part of Local Plan Policies PMT1 and PMT2, as is the Boden Mill site which is identified as having “Good” potential for development in the Study. The East Street Regeneration Area is identified as having “Reasonable” potential for development.

Question 7.4

Does Chard need to develop sites outside of the defined Town Centre for retail and other town centre uses or focus on improving the existing Town Centre?

Which of the options identified above (1, 2 and 3) would you like to see developed and why?

Infrastructure

- 7.29 The 'Millfield Link' forms part of the CEDA proposal and is identified as being key to solving the capacity issues at the Convent Link. This alternative 'orbital' road route running north to south between the A358 north, A30 and A358 south (through CEDA) is to be delivered in phases over the short, medium and long term, alongside new development. It is identified in the IDP as being Priority 1 and 2. The Council's commitment to its delivery is demonstrated by its inclusion in the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulation 123 list⁸².
- 7.30 The potential to re-open Chard Junction station has been considered in the past, but currently remains a financially unviable option to consider. Any reopening would need to be justified by robust evidence, including a business case.
- 7.31 Although a dedicated town ('bespoke') bus service within Chard is unlikely to be commercially viable, there is the potential to increase the frequency of services to neighbouring towns and improving bus access within Chard by appropriate routing.
- 7.32 Greater permeability for cyclists travelling within and across the town is advocated. The proposal is to link to longer distance routes such as National Cycle Route 33 and the Stop Line Way. Sustrans have proposed to extend the traffic free section of the Stop Line Way from Chard to Tatworth in the medium term, initially following the old railway line (*Priority 2*). However, at present, there is a lack of identified or secured funding for this scheme.
- 7.33 In addition, the Local Plan aspires (Policy TA3) to the creation of a sustainable transport interchange in the town, and identifies that contributions will be sought from developers for this solution (*Priority 3*).
- 7.34 Policies PMT1 and PMT2 make provision for a new primary school within the Plan period. Although SCC do not have plans for a new primary school the implications of any additional housing growth on school capacity and education infrastructure will be monitored and managed to ensure arrangements are in place to meet demand and that additional growth does not create capacity issues.
- 7.35 In terms of water supply and waste water, Wessex Water is upgrading the Chard Spine Main (*Priority 1*) and off-site sewers (*Priority 2*). Wessex Water has also indicated a treatment works scheme may be required in the medium term, subject to growth and water quality objectives (*Priority 2*).
- 7.36 New housing generates a need for additional open space and outdoor play space, sports, community and cultural facilities; although the achievement of these infrastructure items is not fundamental to delivering planned development (*Priority 2 and Priority 3*). Specific priorities that have been identified through the Chard Regeneration Scheme / Chard Eastern Development Area for two new sports grounds and changing facilities (catering to the football and rugby clubs), youth facilities and equipped play areas (*Priority 2*).
- 7.37 Based upon current available information, development proposed at Chard in the Local Plan is unlikely to result in abnormal or fundamental infrastructure constraints relating to

⁸² [https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-permission/community-infrastructure-levy-\(cil\)/](https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-permission/community-infrastructure-levy-(cil)/)

flood risk and drainage, telecommunications, waste and recycling, health care, or emergency services.

- 7.38 Overall, the delivery of these infrastructure items will be dependent on securing contributions from development (where viable), along with obtaining other funding streams.

Question 7.5

In addition to the infrastructure described above, are there any other infrastructure requirements for Chard?

Primary Market Towns – Crewkerne

Spatial Portrait

- 7.39 Crewkerne is the third largest town in South Somerset. Situated in the south west of the District, close to the Dorset border, it lies on the junction of the A30 (London to Exeter) and A356 (Martock to Dorchester). The town is nine miles from Yeovil and seven miles from Chard. The future of the town has focused on the delivery of one large-scale mixed use site, known locally as the CLR site, although this has still not commenced.

Housing

- 7.40 Local Plan Policy SS5 (Delivering New Housing Growth) states that Crewkerne should deliver 961 new dwellings over the Plan period. Figure 7.8 below shows that, to date, there have been 965 completions or commitments, meaning that if built out the Plan target will be reached.

Figure 7.8: Housing Delivery (Net)

	Dwellings
Net Completions (01/04/06 to 31/03/17)	355
Existing Commitments (as at 31/03/17)	610
Total	965

Source: SSDC Monitoring Database

- 7.41 The Strategic Site KS/CREW1 (known as the CLR Site) has been granted outline permission and a new Section 106 agreement was completed earlier this year. (See also Policy HG1). Whilst there are a large number of commitments in Crewkerne the HELAA (2017) does identify several sites that could also deliver over 200 additional dwellings within five years.
- 7.42 The Inspector's report on the current Local Plan 2006-2028 states that the completion of a Section 106 agreement for the CLR site indicated a commitment to moving the development forward and he was satisfied that the policy was sound at that time. Nevertheless, he stated that monitoring of the situation would be required to ensure that should progress not occur as anticipated, other measures would be considered. Given

that the Key Site development has not yet commenced and renewed concerns are being expressed about its viability due to infrastructure costs and the Community Infrastructure Levy, this consultation on Issues and Options presents an opportunity to review the position.

7.43 In the absence of progress on the CLR development to date, the alternatives for consideration now appear to be to either:

- a) Seek to identify another suitable location for strategic growth, although the CLR site has planning permission and could still be implemented;
- or
- b) Continue to promote the development of the CLR site and resist an alternative strategic development site on the edge of Crewkerne.

Question 7.6

Which of the following options should be progressed through the LPR?

Option 7.6

7.6(a) Continue to encourage the development of the CLR site and to resist alternative very major developments on the edge of the built up area.

7.6(b) Identify an alternative location for the strategic growth of Crewkerne; and if so, where could the most appropriate location be?

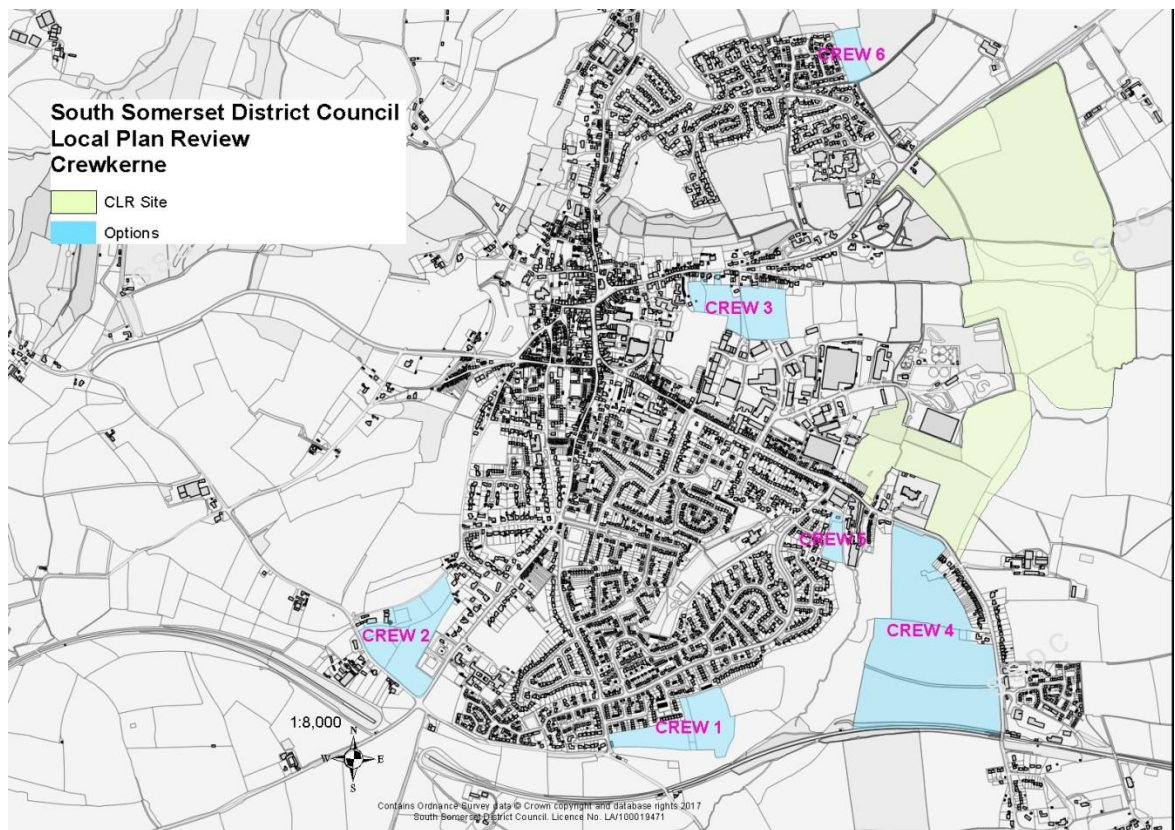
7.44 Figure 7.9 identifies further options for additional growth in Crewkerne. If taken forward through the LPR they would be refined to become allocations.

Figure 7.9: Options for Housing Growth at Crewkerne

Option	Location	Comments / Constraints
CREW1	Land east of Lang Road	<p>This site to the south of the town could probably accommodate around 65 dwellings. Its topography may however be challenging.</p> <p>The Crewkerne Peripheral Landscape Study identified the site having a moderate-high capacity to accommodate built development. The option is located within BMV agricultural land.</p> <p>The western half of the site was considered to be suitable, available and achievable for housing development in the HELAA (W/CREW/0003). The other half of the site was not submitted for the HELAA.</p>

CREW2	Land south of Curriot Hill	<p>This site to the south-west of the town could potentially accommodate up to 75 dwellings, but the Crewkerne Peripheral Landscape Study identified the site as having a moderate –low capacity to accommodate built development. The option is located within BMV agricultural land.</p> <p>The site was considered to be suitable, available and achievable for housing development in the HELAA (W/CREW/0006).</p>
CREW3	Land rear of Penlain	<p>This site to the east of the town centre has a high capacity to accommodate built development and could provide about 60 dwellings. The option is located within BMV agricultural land.</p> <p>The western half of the site was considered to be suitable, available and achievable for housing development in the HELAA (W/CREW/0012). The other half of the site was not submitted for the HELAA.</p>
CREW4	Land west of A356 (Station Road)	<p>This site of 15.1 hectares is to the south east of the town. A public right of way crosses the site, which is classified as BMV agricultural land. It could potentially accommodate about 270 dwellings.</p> <p>It could possibly provide the opportunity to provide more parking at the nearby railway station.</p> <p>The site was not identified through the HELAA process.</p>
CREW5	Land east of Charlton Close	<p>This site to the south-east of the town is adjacent to a Conservation Area and Local Wildlife Site. It is also an archaeological site and within the curtilage of a listed building. It could probably accommodate about 10 dwellings. The option is located within BMV agricultural land.</p> <p>The site was considered to be suitable, available and achievable for housing development in the HELAA (W/CREW/0024).</p>
CREW6	Land east of Chestnut Avenue	<p>This site is to the north east of the town. It has a moderate-low capacity to accommodate built development and may provide 25 dwellings. The option is located within BMV agricultural land.</p> <p>The site was considered to be suitable, available and achievable for housing development in the HELAA (W/MERR/0011).</p>

Figure 7.10: Crewkerne Options



Question 7.7

Which of the following options should be taken forward through the LPR?

Option 7.7

Options for housing growth at Crewkerne include:

- 7.7(a)** CREW 1: Land east of Lang Road
- 7.7(b)** CREW 2: Land south of Curriot Hill
- 7.7(c)** CREW 3: Land rear of Penlain
- 7.7(d)** CREW 4: Land west of A356 (Station Road)
- 7.7(e)** CREW 5: Land east of Charlton Close
- 7.7(f)** CREW 6: Land east of Chestnut Avenue
- 7.7(g)** Another option (please specify)

Employment

- 7.45 There has been a net increase of 1.3ha of employment land in the town since 2006 and an overall gain in floorspace of 3,513m², although 8,517m² have also been lost and there are expected to be further net losses of over 5,000m² through developments under construction and unimplemented planning permissions, as set out in figure 7.11 below.

Figure 7.11: Crewkerne Economic Development as at 31 March 2017

	Land (Hectares) (Net)	Floorspace (Square Metres) (Net)
Complete	1.31	3,513
Under Construction	-0.07	-250
Not Yet Started	2.95	-4,951
Total	4.19	-1,688
Local Plan Requirement	10.10	
Residual Requirement	5.91	

Source: SSDC Monitoring Database

- 7.46 The Local Plan strategy for employment delivery in Crewkerne is fundamentally linked to the delivery of the CLR site and, in recognition of this, the employment element of the site has been identified as a Strategic Employment Site (Policy EP1). The Council has conceded through its consideration of the application relating to the redevelopment of southern part of the CLR site (14/02141/OUT), that the quantum of employment land required to ensure a balanced development is in fact less than about 10 hectares, as required in the Local Plan. It was agreed that the outstanding amount of employment land required in Crewkerne was actually 3.74 hectares.
- 7.47 There are no suitable, available and achievable employment sites identified in the HELAA but one site is identified for mixed-use, which is however the CLR site.
- 7.48 Given the Council's commitment to the delivery of the CLR site, an approach to delivering employment land in the short term may be to take a positive approach to alternative (non-allocated) sites, or allocate sites in other locations either within Crewkerne or a reasonable distance from the settlement but not in the settlement itself, as suggested in Question 5.4 (Settlement Strategy section).

Question 7.8

Should the Council reduce the employment land requirement for Crewkerne based on the planning approval for the CLR site?

Question 7.9

Should the Council consider allocating additional employment land for Crewkerne? If so where?

Retailing

- 7.49 Crewkerne has the third largest amount of town centre retail floorspace in the District, with 2,374sq.m convenience floorspace and 2,942sq.m comparison floorspace. The mix of Class A Uses is broadly similar to the UK average, but with a proportion of Class A2 services almost double the UK average; and less than half of the average proportion of vacant units. The South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centres Uses Study identifies the following future capacity for retail floorspace.

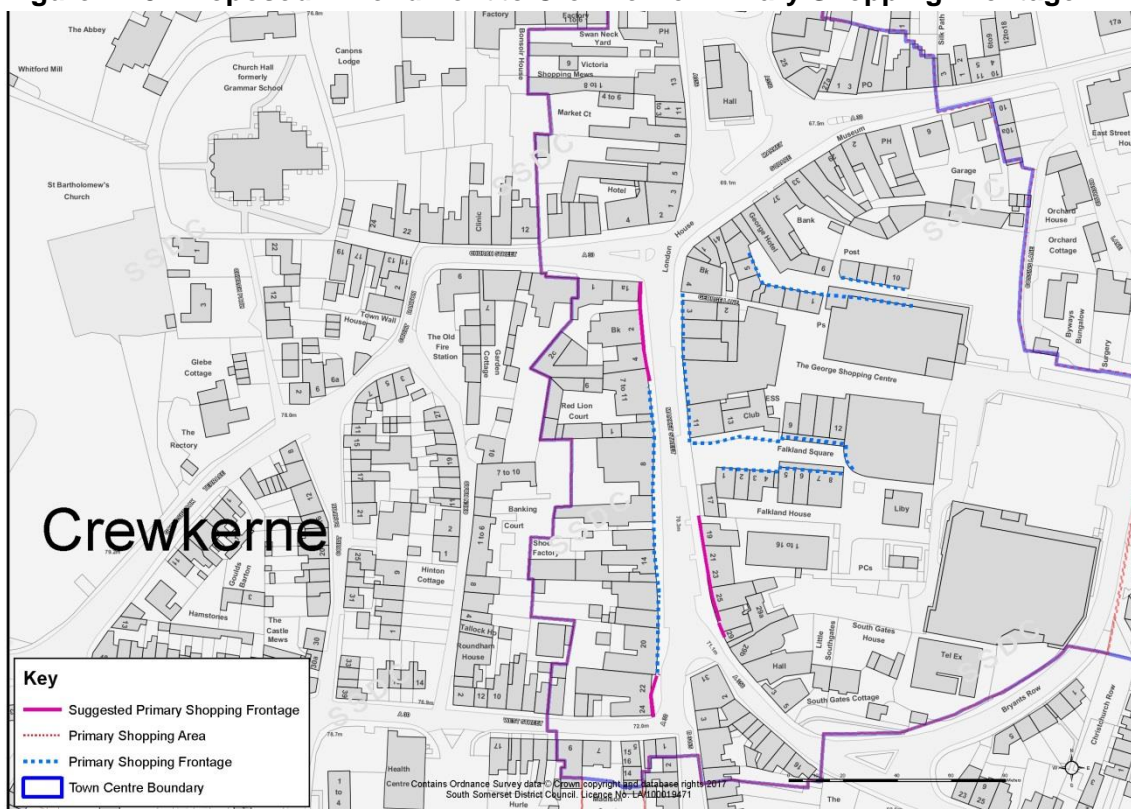
Figure 7.12: Projected Retail Floorspace Capacity in Crewkerne (sq. m. gross)

Type	By 2024	By 2029	By 2034 (Total capacity over Plan period)
Convenience	504	584	661
Comparison	94	223	354
Food and Beverage	15	44	73

Source: South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study, 2017

- 7.50 Crewkerne has a large vacant unit following the closure in early 2017 of the Budgens store (about 1,400 sq. m gross) and the re-occupation of this would help meet some of the requirements of future growth in the Town Centre.
- 7.51 Given the very limited projected growth in floorspace in the centre, projected demand in Crewkerne could be met by small in-fill developments and shop extensions, including the use of upper floors.
- 7.52 Although there is a lower average provision of higher order comparison units, national retailers and food and drink uses, and a relatively high number of charity shops, the centre appears to be performing relatively well. The low vacancy rate suggests reasonable demand for units.
- 7.53 The South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centres Uses Study suggests that the Primary Shopping Frontage could be extended to include all parts of Market Street, where there are a number of Class A1 uses (shops). The potential extension of the designation is illustrated in figure 7.13 below. Policy EP13 of the Local Plan (Protection of Retail Frontages) seeks to prevent the coalescence of non-retail uses that may undermine the dominant retail function in designated frontages.

Figure 7.13: Proposed Amendment to Crewkerne Primary Shopping Frontage



South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centres Uses Study, 2017

Question 7.10

Should the Primary Shopping Frontage for Crewkerne be extended as shown in Figure 7.13?

Infrastructure

- 7.54 There are traffic congestion issues at peak times in the town centre. A significant road scheme is proposed as part of delivering the Crewkerne Key Site. The road would provide a link from the A30 to the A356 in the eastern part of the town, providing an alternative route for vehicles. The requirement of the outline planning permission is for the road to be delivered as new housing and employment development progresses through phases.
- 7.55 Crewkerne railway station is located around a mile outside the town centre, offering an hourly service from London Waterloo to Exeter in each direction. Use of this station has grown by around 50% over the last 10 years. A dynamic passing loop is being considered between Chard Junction and Crewkerne as one of the options to improve the rail network in the area in the medium to long term, although further work is required to justify this investment.
- 7.56 The Environment Agency (EA) maintains several elements of infrastructure around the town, including a trash/security screen at Lyewater and several culverted channels.

Localised surface water flooding problems exist in the town, exacerbated by small culverted watercourses, which are prone to blockage or are undersized. Developer-led improvements and/or contributions may be required to improve failing culverts where impacted by new development.

- 7.57 In the medium term, the EA are seeking to redirect a section of the Viney Brook, which is currently culverted, into a new open channel at the edge of the Key Site. This would enhance the natural environment of the stream and could remove some of the inherent problems associated with culverts, especially during flood flows, and could be achieved through developer funding in delivering Phase Two of the Key Site.
- 7.58 In the short to medium term, Ashlands First School will probably have a sufficient number of places available to accommodate new additional pupils arising from growth of the town, but in the longer term, a new First school would be required. If this is not provided as part of the CLR development, then an alternative location will be needed within a major strategic site. A number of smaller sites around the periphery of the town would not have the critical mass to support a new school site. Maiden Beech Middle and Wadham Schools would probably have sufficient capacity, but additional accommodation may be required to be funded by developers.
- 7.59 New housing does generate a need for additional open space and outdoor play space, sports, community and cultural facilities; although the timing of this is not fundamental to delivering development. Particular priorities are new play areas and youth facilities. Delivery of this infrastructure will be dependent on securing contributions from development (where viable), along with obtaining other funding streams.
- 7.60 Subject to growth and water quality objectives, Wessex Water may carry out a treatment works scheme at Crewkerne in the medium term. Development proposed in the Local Plan at Crewkerne is unlikely to result in abnormal or fundamental infrastructure constraints relating to the other utilities, flood risk and drainage, telecommunications, waste and recycling, health care, or emergency services.

Question 7.11

In addition to the infrastructure described above, are there any other infrastructure requirements for Crewkerne?

Primary Market Towns – Ilminster

Spatial Portrait

- 7.61 Ilminster is situated in the west of the District and benefits from its strategic location where the A303 and A358 meet. Taunton is 12 miles north-west and Yeovil, 15 miles east. These settlements are easily accessible and Ilminster has functional relationships with both.

- 7.62 Highways England plans to dual the A358 from the A303 from the Southfields roundabout, which will significantly enhance road connectivity to the motorway network for Ilminster and is likely to bring about opportunities for growth.
- 7.63 The entire Parish area of Ilminster has been designated as a Neighbourhood Area for the purposes of the preparation of the Ilminster Neighbourhood Plan.

Housing

- 7.64 Local Plan Policy SS5 (Delivering New Housing Growth) states that Ilminster should deliver at least 496 new dwellings over the Plan period. Figure 7.14 illustrates that the settlement is delivering growth to meet this requirement. Given that it has already achieved over 50% of the Local Plan target and we are less than halfway through the life of the Local Plan, it clearly can accommodate growth at a significant pace. This further illustrates its market attractiveness. Unsurprisingly, there is pressure from the development industry to deliver more housing in Ilminster.

Figure 7.14: Housing Delivery (Net)

	Dwellings
Net Completions (01/04/06 to 31/03/17)	264
Existing Commitments (as at 31/03/17)	120
Total	384

Source: SSDC Monitoring Database

- 7.65 Local Plan Policy PMT3 (Ilminster Direction of Growth – DoG) indicates that the strategic Direction of Growth for the town is to the south west. An outline application for 400 dwellings within the DoG was received by the Council in January 2017⁸³ and a decision is pending.
- 7.66 The Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment, 2017, (HELAA) identifies that there are suitable, available and achievable sites in Ilminster with the potential to deliver about 660 dwellings; 400 of these being considered in application 16/05500/OUT.
- 7.67 Further housing growth is required across the District and based on the evidence, Ilminster is well placed to accommodate the growth. The housing market is strong in Ilminster and, with the planned improved infrastructure, the town's services and facilities could accommodate additional growth. The delivery of employment growth will be key to the settlement's sustainable development.
- 7.68 Each option is described in more detail in Figure 7.15.

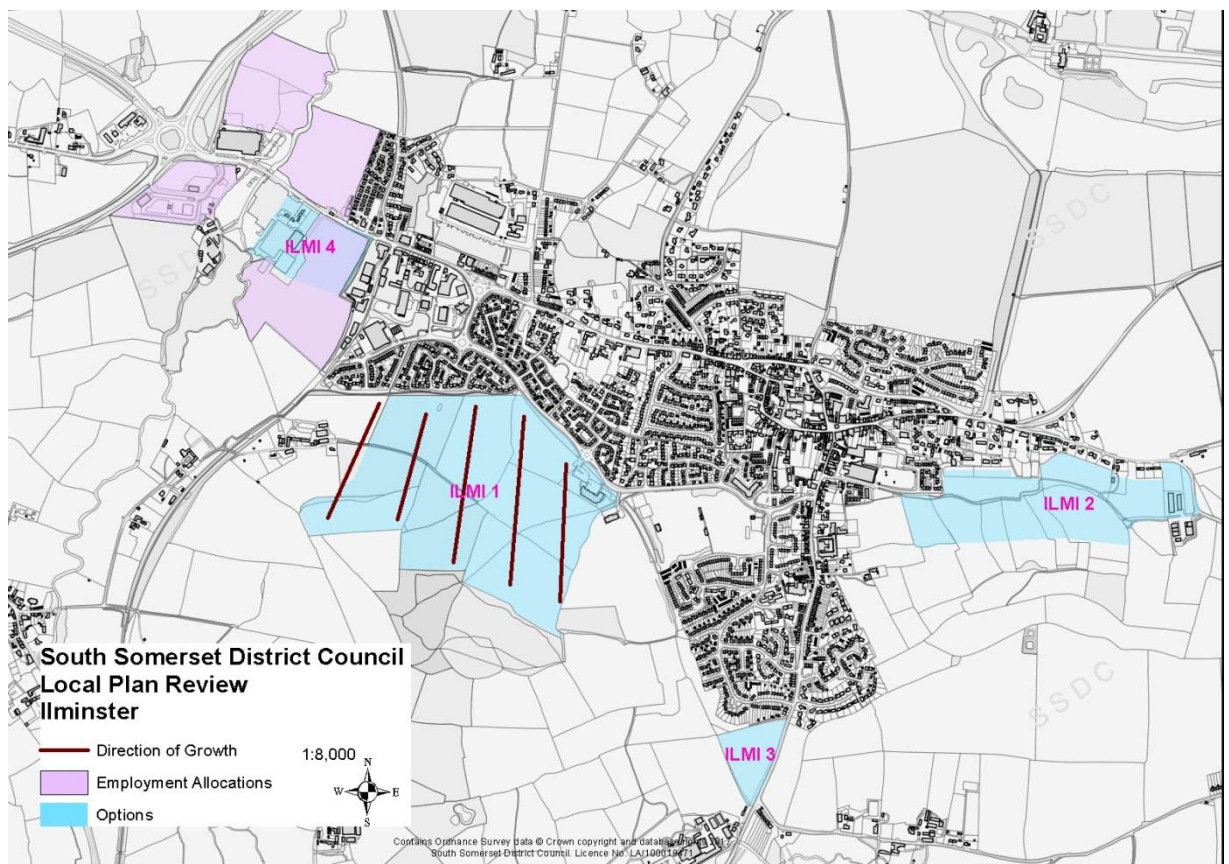
⁸³ Application reference 16/05500/OUT

Figure 7.15: Options for Housing Growth at Ilminster

Option	Location	Comments / Constraints
ILMI 1	Land at Canal Way	<p>This option, HELAA site W/ILMI/0301, includes the land currently identified as the strategic Direction of Growth for housing. It could accommodate around 400 homes and a school site.</p> <p>The option is located within BMV agricultural land, Grade 3a. A County Archaeological site and County Wildlife site are present on the site.</p> <p>Planning application 16/05500/OUT is pending.</p>
ILMI 2	Land east of Shudrick Lane	<p>This site, with a total site area of 14ha, is to the east of the town centre. The site, which falls partially within HELAA site W/ILMI/0009/B, was identified in the Peripheral Landscape Assessment as having a high capacity to accommodate built development. It is BMV agricultural land and adjoins the Ilminster Conservation Area to the north, which includes a number of Listed Buildings. There is a permissive footpath along the Shudrick Stream, which runs westwards through the site. The land rises to the south towards the Pretwood Hill ridgeline.</p> <p>The site has previously been designated as a potential Direction of Growth for the town, but this was eventually withdrawn in favour of one in the south-west direction of Ilminster at Canal Way. It could accommodate some 220 dwellings.</p> <p>A planning application for up to 220 dwellings with associated public open space and engineering works (14/02474/OUT) has previously been refused and dismissed at appeal; the Inspector concluding that “the (harmful) effects on the character and appearance of the landscape would significantly and demonstrably outweigh its benefits. This is so assessed in relation to the development plan, with which it conflicts overall, despite the reduced weight given to housing policies. It is also so assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole”.</p> <p>Nevertheless, the Inspector considering the current Local Plan found no fundamental difficulties in the Shudrick Valley site being developed; and felt only that the Canal Way Direction of Growth was preferable.</p> <p>Moving forward and given the District’s future housing needs, the Local Plan Review provides the opportunity to reconsider whether an allocation in this location might now be acceptable and whether its benefits may outweigh any potential harm to the surrounding landscape and setting.</p>

ILMI 3	Greenway Farm, Dowlsh Ford	<p>This small site situated to the south of the town is a greenfield site adjoining the existing development area and includes HELAA site W/ILMI/0102. It could accommodate around 45 homes.</p> <p>The option is located in BMV agricultural land, and the Peripheral Landscape Assessment suggests it has some landscape sensitivity. A County Archaeological site is also present.</p>
ILMI 4	Land at Station Road	<p>This site of 5.2ha is to the south of Station Road and is part former industrial. It currently has an Employment allocation in the Local Plan but such development has not been forthcoming.</p> <p>It is within Flood Zone 3 and is partially classified as BMV agricultural land 2 and 3a.</p> <p>It could potentially accommodate about 95 dwellings.</p> <p>The site was not identified through the HELAA. It includes part of the former Horlicks site.</p>

Figure 7.16: Ilminster Options



Question 7.12

Which of the following options should be taken forward through the LPR?

Options 7.12

Options at for housing growth at Ilminster include:

7.12(a) ILMI1: Land at Canal Way

7.12(b) ILMI2: Land east of Shudrick Lane

7.12(c) ILMI3: Greenway Farm, Dowlish Ford

7.12(d) ILMI4: Land at Station Road

7.12(e) Another option (please specify)

Employment

- 7.69 Local Plan Policy SS3 (Delivering New Employment Land) identifies existing employment land commitments in Ilminster of about 23 hectares⁸⁴, resulting in no need for additional employment land provision up to 2028. The commitments include the three Strategic Employment Sites identified in Local Plan Policy EP1 (Strategic Employment Sites).
- 7.70 The three Strategic Employment Sites in Ilminster are:
- Land West of Horlicks (saved allocation ME/ILMI/3);
 - Land off Station Road (saved allocation ME/ILMI/4); and
 - Land adjacent to Powrmatic (saved allocation ME/ILMI/5).
- 7.71 These sites have been carried forward from previous Local Plans because of their location on the A303/A358 junction, with good links to the M5, is considered a strong locational advantage which could secure major investment into the District. It should be noted though that the land west of Horlicks and land adjacent to Powrmatic have been carried forward from the Chard and Ilminster Local Plan, which was adopted in 1995, over twenty years ago.
- 7.72 Development has occurred on the land west of Horlicks (ME/ILMI/3) and now only one hectare of the original three remains available. The Highways Agency operates a maintenance depot from here and a motorhome storage and hire business was set up in 2015. It is likely that the remaining hectare will come forward over time.
- 7.73 There has been developer interest in the Station Road site (ME/ILMI/4) but site viability has made delivery challenging. The site is large (about 13 hectares) and straddles either side of Station Road. Significant works are required to achieve highways access to the

⁸⁴ As at April 2011

site and developer contributions are required for flood remediation by the Environment Agency and to upgrade the Southfields roundabout from Highways England. The site cannot be developed without this infrastructure.

- 7.74 The land adjacent to Powrmatic (ME/ILMI/5) has no planning history; this is not surprising as the site was originally earmarked in the 1991-2011 Local Plan for the expansion of Powrmatic Ltd. The site is currently owned by Powrmatic and accessed through their existing business and therefore is unlikely to contribute to the wider supply of employment land in Ilminster.
- 7.75 The former Horlicks site itself is vacant brownfield land but this has also remained out of use for a significant period of time. One of the options for housing growth now being suggested (ILMI 4) includes part of this site.
- 7.76 Whilst these sites have been available to the market for a considerable time, the planned upgrade of the A303/A358 will further improve their accessibility. The amount of land available for development should be explored further though given the economic outlook and associated land implications outlined in the strategy section of this plan. The three sites are considered suitable, available and achievable in the HELAA.
- 7.77 Whilst Ilminster has lost some of its traditional manufacturing base and much of the allocated employment land has been available for a considerable time, there are a number of existing employment areas in the town. They are all located to the west of the town, which is expected given the location of the A303.
- 7.78 Monitoring information shows how Ilminster has delivered the second largest amount of employment land (in net terms) than any other settlement in the District, Castle Cary delivering the most. It has delivered a strong amount of floorspace compared to the other South Somerset Market towns.
- 7.79 This can in part be attributed to the development of some key infrastructure, a supermarket at Shudrick Lane and a new medical centre at Canal Way. The majority of land and floorspace delivered is still in traditional employment uses ('B' uses for planning purposes) and reflecting the manufacturing history of Ilminster.

Figure 7.17: Ilminster Economic Development as at 31 March 2017

	Land (Hectares) (Net)	Floorspace (Square Metres) (Net)
Complete	4.03	15,647
Under Construction	-0.06	583
Not Yet Started	-1.81	-1,498
Total	2.16	14,732
Local Plan Requirement	23.05	
Residual Requirement	20.89	

Source: SSDC Monitoring Database

- 7.80 Based on the current evidence there is sufficient land identified for employment growth in Ilminster. The land that is allocated is however not coming forward, and if this is preventing other sites from coming forward, should an alternative approach be considered to deliver employment land in the settlement?

Question 7.13

Should the Council consider deallocating some of the employment land in Ilminster as it has been allocated for a number of years?

If yes, which of the sites should be deallocated and why?

Or should the Council deallocate all the sites and allocate alternative ones of a smaller scale?

If the Council allocated alternative sites where should these be?

Retailing

- 7.81 The Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study, 2017, highlights that Ilminster town centre performs a local retail and service role. It is a healthy town centre with vacancy rates significantly below the national average (2.9% compared to 11.2%) and a high level of independent shops. The popular F.east vegetarian restaurant has however vacated the town centre to move to Rose Mills, close to the A303. The Tesco Superstore which was built in 2007 has a short pedestrian link to the town centre.
- 7.82 The South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centres Uses Study identifies the following future capacity for retail floorspace.

Figure 7.18: Projected Retail Floorspace Capacity in Ilminster (sq. m. gross)

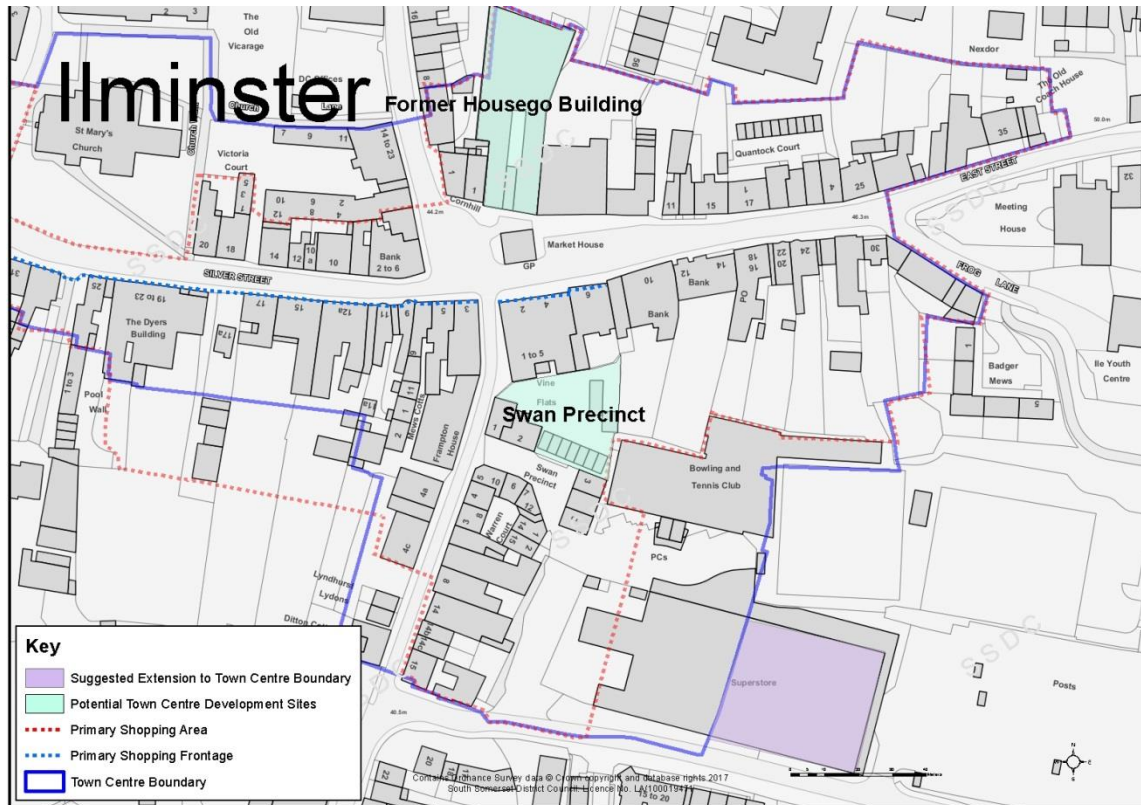
Type	By 2024	By 2029	By 2034 (Total capacity over Plan period)
Convenience	-	-	-
Comparison	112	265	421
Food and Beverage	20	61	101

Source: South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study, 2017

- 7.83 The limited projected growth in town centre floorspace could be met by small in-fill developments, shop extensions, including the use of upper floors, and retail opportunities identified in the Study: the former Housego building and the Swan Precinct.
- 7.84 The South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study recommends that, as the town centre will continue to be vulnerable to impacts of development under 2,500 sq. m gross floorspace, the local impact threshold of 750 sq. m gross stated in Policy EP12 (Floorspace Threshold for Impact Assessments) should remain.

- 7.85 The Ilminster town centre boundary includes half of the Tesco store. For consistency it should be expanded to include the whole store with other centre boundaries as shown in Figure 7.19.

Figure 7.19 Potential Extension to Town Centre Boundary Designation



Question 7.14

Do you agree that the designated Town Centre for Ilminster should be amended to include the entire Tesco store?

- 7.86 The Study does not indicate the need for further food shopping facilities in the town, but does see some small growth potential for non-food shopping and the food and beverage sector. The Gooch and Housego building, within the town centre, is suggested as a suitable development opportunity for such uses; this should be explored through the Development Management and Area Development processes within the Council. It is not considered necessary for the Local Plan to allocate this site for retail purposes.

Question 7.15

Do you agree that there is no need for the Local Plan to make retail allocations in Ilminster?

Infrastructure

- 7.87 The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) 2015/16 indicates that the economic development proposed at Station Road requires flood risk alleviation and highways works to deliver the scheme. A Surface Water Feasibility Study is now programmed to take place in 2019/20.
- 7.88 The IDP indicated that Somerset County Council was assessing the potential impacts of additional housing growth in Ilminster above the adopted Local Plan figures on education provision. Somerset County Council has now indicated that it is looking to bring forward a new first school within the Direction of Growth as the existing first school (Greenfylde) is reaching capacity. An application is anticipated in the near future.
- 7.89 New forms of development will generate the need for additional infrastructure although the timing may not be fundamental to delivering the development. The infrastructure providers are being consulted as part of the LPR and any additional infrastructure required to meet future growth in Ilminster will be identified.

Question 7.16

In addition to the infrastructure described above, are there any other infrastructure requirements for Ilminster?

Primary Market Towns – Wincanton

Spatial Portrait

- 7.90 Wincanton is located in the east of South Somerset and is often seen as a gateway into Somerset from the east. It has a history of being the focal point for the east of South Somerset district.
- 7.91 The A303 trunk road defines the southern edge of the settlement. It is close to the Dorset and Wiltshire borders and has links with the market towns of Castle Cary in South Somerset (approximately 7 miles away) and Gillingham in North Dorset District (approximately 8.5 miles away).
- 7.92 The town's location means that there is a functional relationship with Wiltshire, North Dorset and Mendip, as well as the rest of South Somerset. The relationship with these other local authority areas is primarily associated with travel to work patterns, and overall economic-related functions, such as access to markets, goods and labour. However, the movement of individuals across these local authority areas as they seek to access the housing market also has a bearing on Wincanton.
- 7.93 The settlement has a resident population of 5,435 people⁸⁵. The usual resident population data combined with the age structure and change data shows that the settlement of Wincanton is growing and becoming older. It has also shown a rise in the number of pre-school aged children, at in excess of 6% in 2011.

⁸⁵ Census 2011, BUA

- 7.94 The Wincanton Neighbourhood Area was designated in March 2014. Plan preparation has reached the Examination stage⁸⁶. The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate land for development but has the following objectives:
- Identifying the most sustainable locations for development
 - Housing suitable for Wincanton's population
 - New employment space near the A303
 - Make the town centre more attractive to users
 - Protect open spaces & improve walking & cycling routes
- 7.95 In adopting the Local Plan, the Council was aware of its commitment to carry out an "early review" of the Local Plan within three years of the date of adoption (i.e. by March 2018).
- 7.96 The reason for the early review was to clarify housing and employment provision in Wincanton⁸⁷. The Local Plan has a residual requirement of five dwellings at Wincanton. The Inspector considered that this was not an appropriate strategy for the settlement in the long term.

Housing

- 7.97 Local Plan Policy SS5 (Delivering New Housing Growth) sets out that Wincanton should deliver 703 new dwellings over the Plan period. Monitoring shows that just over half way through the Plan period the settlement is delivering growth to meet this requirement and will exceed it if or when the existing commitments are built. This means that Wincanton will need to accommodate more housing growth going forward in its role as a Primary Market Town.

Figure 7.20: Housing Completions and Commitments

	Dwellings
Net Completions (01/04/06 to 31/03/17)	638
Existing Commitments (as at 31/03/17)	306
Total	944

Source: SSDC Monitoring Database

- 7.98 The Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment, 2017 (HELAA)⁸⁸, identifies that over the next 10 years there is land with the potential to provide about 563 dwellings on suitable, available and achievable sites.

⁸⁶ The Neighbourhood Planning (general Regulations 2012 (as amended).

⁸⁷ See Paragraph 100 of the Inspector's Report, dated 8th January 2015:

http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/700388/south_somerset_lp_final_report.pdf

⁸⁸ South Somerset Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment, 2017

<https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/early-review-of-local-plan-2006-2028/project-management--monitoring/south-somerset-housing-and-employment-land-availability-assessment/>

Employment

- 7.99 Local Plan Policy SS3 (Delivering New Employment Land) identifies an overall requirement for 7.94 hectares (ha) of employment land for Wincanton over the Plan period. At that time, the residual figure was 4.38 ha, the rest having planning permission or already having been built⁸⁹. This 4.38ha is required to be delivered within the Direction of Growth for strategic employment purposes, to the west of the town. At the time of writing, no planning application has been received for economic development uses within the Direction of Growth. The potential for the land to be identified for mixed use, employment and housing has been raised through the HELAA.
- 7.100 Wincanton is located on the A303 which gives it an advantage in terms of connectivity with the rest of the south west as well as the south east. The planned major road schemes to upgrade the A303 Sparkford to Ilchester and Amesbury to Berwick and the A358 Taunton to Southfields should further improve that connectivity.
- 7.101 The existing main employment areas in Wincanton are located at:
- Wincanton Business Park;
 - Bennetts Field Trading Estate; and
 - The Tythings.
- 7.102 Wincanton has delivered the second highest amount of land and floorspace in Area East after Ansford & Castle Cary and a reasonable level compared to the other Primary Market Towns. Some floorspace has been lost to a number of alternative economic uses with no significant loss to residential use.
- 7.103 Some key developments at Wincanton include delivery of plots at Wincanton Business Park, the development of the Travel Lodge, Wagtail public house, and KFC drive-thru at Long Close, the completion of the new health centre and a new building for Roachfords Garden Machinery. Figure 7.21 summarises the position as at 31 March 2017.

Figure 7.21: Wincanton Economic Development as at 31 March 2017

	Land (Hectares) (Net)	Floorspace (Square Metres) (Net)
Complete	1.40	11,400
Under Construction	0.51	-122
Not Yet Started	0	809
Total	1.91	12,087
Local Plan Requirement	7.94	
Residual Requirement	6.03	

Source: SSDC Monitoring Database

⁸⁹ The residual figure has increased to 6.03 hectares as planning permission has not been implemented and has lapsed, making the figure increase.

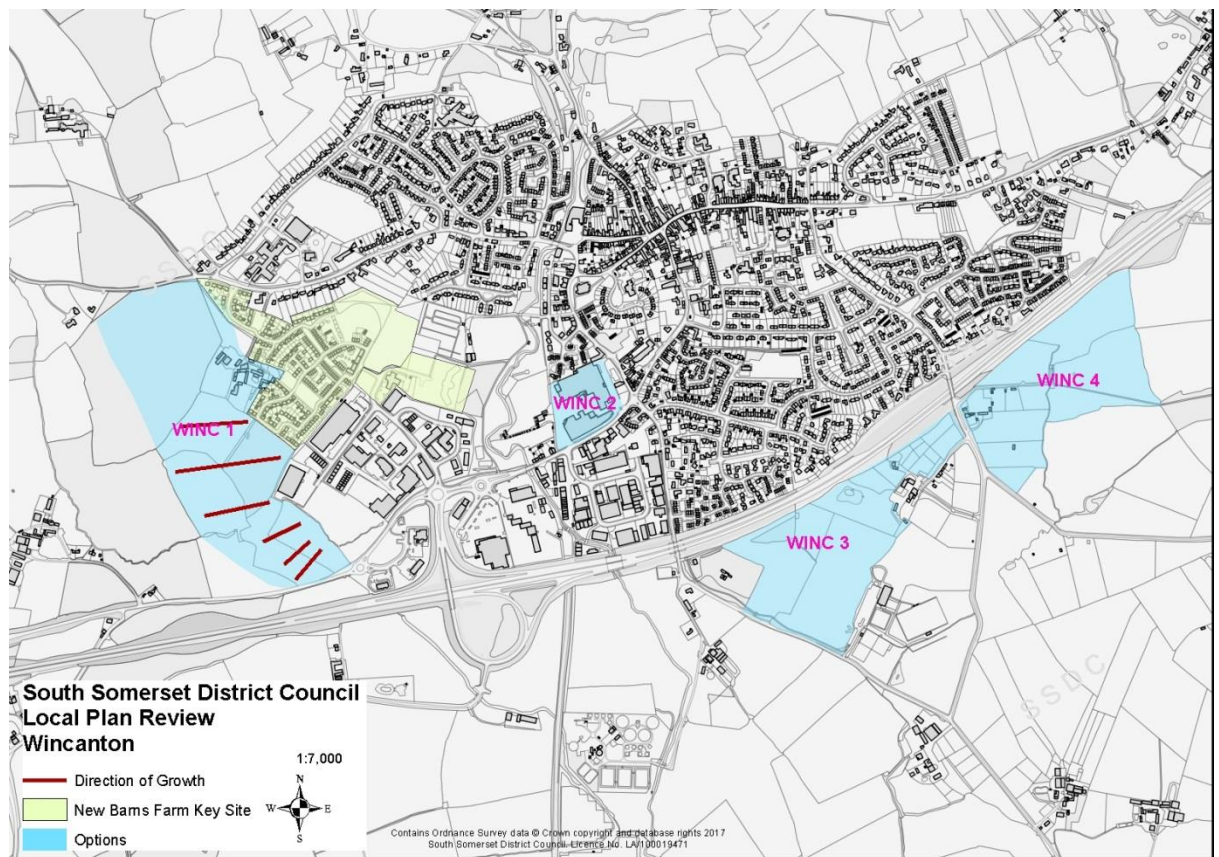
- 7.104 The HELAA shows that there are suitable, available and achievable sites for economic development uses or mixed use in the Direction of Growth to the west of Wincanton, amounting to 1.48ha of land and 5,100m² of floorspace.
- 7.105 The emerging Neighbourhood Plan suggests that employment growth south of the A303 may be appropriate for economic development use, although it does not seek to make any land allocations. The HELAA sites south of the A303 land have been identified as not being suitable as they are divorced from the existing settlement, severed by the A303 and do not adjoin the development area. Flooding is also an issue. The land includes playing pitches; previously the need for all the pitches was unknown, although the emerging Playing Pitch Strategy indicates that there may not be the demand in the future for the three disused pitches.
- 7.106 Based upon current evidence, a number of options for the location of additional growth in Wincanton have been identified.

Figure 7.22 Options for Housing and Employment for Growth at Wincanton:

Option	Location	Comments / Constraints
WINC 1	West of Wincanton Business Park and New Barns Farm	<p>This option includes the land currently identified as the Direction of Growth for strategic employment plus an area of adjoining land to the north identified in the HELAA.</p> <p>The area north of New Barns Farm is defined in the Submission Wincanton Neighbourhood Plan as being “visually sensitive area”.</p> <p>The option is located within BMV agricultural land. The landscape to the north of the site is more sensitive than the south and there is some archaeology.</p> <p>An area to the south east is within a Mineral Safeguarding area, there are rights of way across the site and a small area is within Flood Zone 3.</p> <p>The Peripheral Landscape Study identifies the land as having a moderate, moderate-high and high capacity to accommodate built development with a very small area in the centre having low capacity.</p> <p>The site could accommodate mixed use development and has the potential to accommodate around 500 dwellings and 1.48ha of employment land.</p>
WINC 2	The Tythings	<p>This is a brownfield site within the development area and in existing commercial use. HELAA site E/WINC/0007.</p> <p>The site has the potential to accommodate around 50 dwellings.</p>

WINC 3	Land at Moor Lane	<p>The site has some local support for use for economic development use, however there is potential to accommodate around 110 dwellings as part of a mixed use development together with around 4 hectares of land for economic development.</p> <p>Most of the site is identified as not being suitable in the HELAA (E/WINC/0026 and 0025) as it is divorced from the existing settlement, severed by the A303 and does not adjoin the development area. The additional land to the east was not promoted through the HELAA.</p> <p>Flooding is an issue with parts of the site within Flood Zones 2 and 3.</p> <p>Part of the site falls within a Mineral Safeguarding Area.</p> <p>The land includes playing pitches and an area of allotments.</p> <p>The cost of creating a new access from the A303 is unknown.</p>
WINC 4	Land east of Common Road	<p>This option is divorced from the existing settlement, severed by the A303 and does not adjoin the development area. It was not promoted through the HELAA process.</p> <p>The Peripheral Landscape Study identifies the land as having a moderate-high and moderate capacity to accommodate built development.</p> <p>The site could accommodate around 225 dwellings.</p>

Figure 7.23: Wincanton Options



Question 7.17

Which of the following options do you think should be taken forward through the LPR?

Options 7.17

Options for growth at Wincanton include:

- 7.17(a)** WINC 1: Land west of Wincanton Business Park and New Barns Farm for mixed use
- 7.17(b)** WINC 2: The Tythings for housing or mixed use
- 7.17(c)** WINC 3: Land at Moor Lane for mixed use
- 7.17(d)** WINC 4: Land east of Common Road for housing development
- 7.17(e)** Another option (please specify)

Retailing

- 7.107 The Retail and Main Town Centres Uses Study⁹⁰ highlights that Wincanton town centre has a limited local catchment area. The main food shopping provision is the out-of-centre Morrisons and Lidl. Whilst there is a range of comparison (non-food) retailers in the Town Centre there is only one national multiple retailer – Boots. The library is located in the Town Centre and there are a variety of service uses including bank, hairdressers, estate agents and restaurants. The Wincanton Health Centre with associated pharmacy moved onto the New Barns Farm development in 2012. The householder shopper survey showed that most respondents do their non-food shopping in Yeovil or Taunton.
- 7.108 The Town Centre is well served by public car parks at Carrington Way, Memorial Hall and Churchfields.
- 7.109 As at January 2017, the town centre had one of the highest vacancy rates in the District (18.9% compared to a national average of 11.2%), which indicates a lack of balance between supply and demand for premises. Developments outside the town centre cumulatively are reducing footfall and the vacancy rate is potentially a reflection of this.
- 7.110 The quantitative assessment of potential capacity for retail floorspace suggests the following for Wincanton:

Figure 7.24: Projected Retail Floorspace Capacity in Wincanton (sq. m. gross)

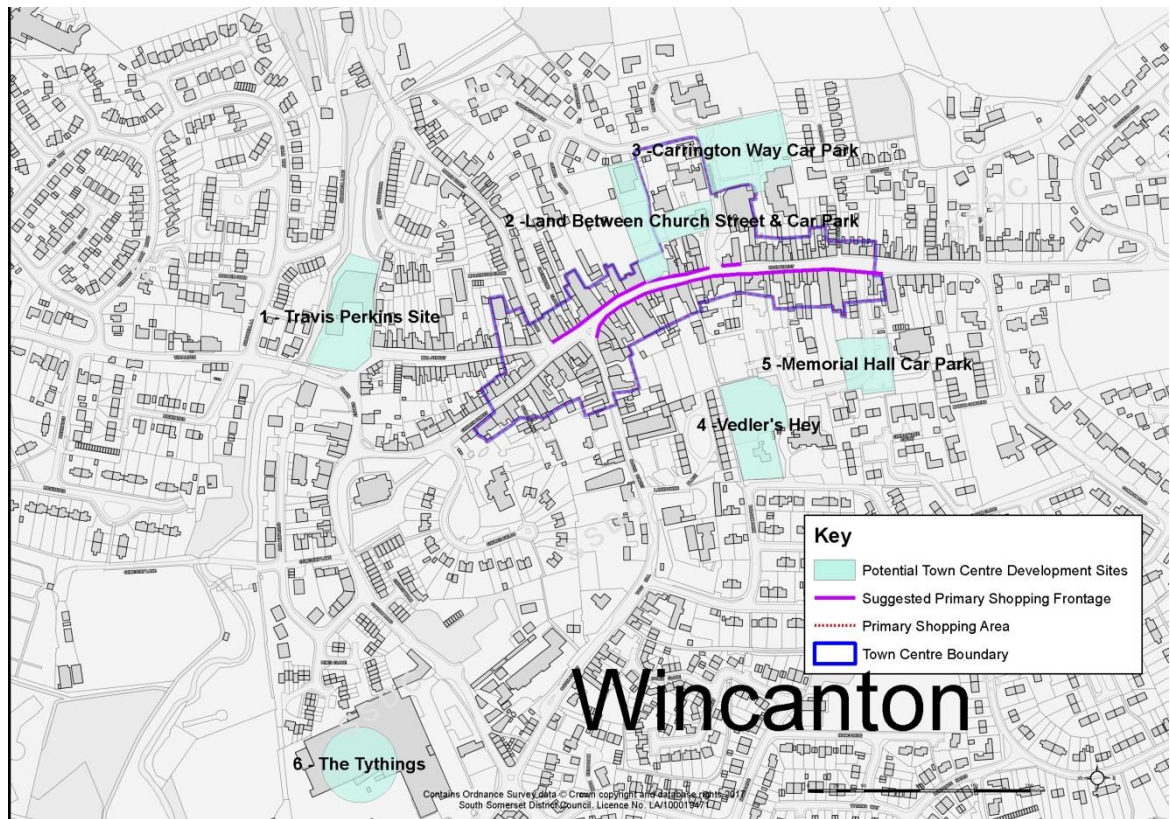
Type	By 2024	By 2029	By 2034 (Total capacity over Plan period)
Convenience	1,740	1,884	2,022
Comparison	129	304	481
Food and Beverage	76	224	367

Source: South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study, 2017

- 7.111 The re-occupation of vacant units could accommodate some of the growth. Improvements to public realm and the pedestrian environment may increase visitors to the area which in turn may reduce vacancy rates. The remaining projected capacity for food shopping will need to be met through the development of further sites. There is a relatively high projected convenience goods floorspace within Wincanton with a capacity to deliver a small supermarket within Wincanton Town.
- 7.112 The Retail and Main Town Centres Uses Study suggests a number of opportunities for town centre development. The overall development potential of each site has been assessed in the study and is considered to be as follows:
- Travis Perkins Site – reasonable
 - Land Between Church Street and Car Park - reasonable
 - Memorial Hall Car Park - poor
 - Carrington Way Car Park – poor due to loss of car parking
 - Vedler's Hey – poor for town centre uses
 - Memorial Hall Car Park - poor
 - The Tythings – poor

⁹⁰ South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study, Lichfields, 2017

Figure 7.25: Development Opportunities in and around Wincanton Town Centre



Source: South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study, 2017

- 7.113 The Travis Perkins site is considered to have “Reasonable” potential for mixed use development with small/medium scale retail at ground floor level with residential or small office space above. The ‘Land Between Church Street and Car Park’ also has “Reasonable” potential for development of a small scale retail unit fronting on High Street and Carrington Way. However the availability of the Travis Perkins site is unclear as it is in active use; it is not well related to the Town Centre boundary and would add to further out of centre development, which would potential erode the town centre further . The Land Between Church Street and Car Park is in existing use including the library. This site combined with the vacant shop units could accommodate most of the floorspace projection up until 2029.

Question 7.18

There is the capacity to accommodate additional development within or on the edge of Wincanton Town Centre. Which option should be taken forward through the LPR?

Options 7.18

Options include:

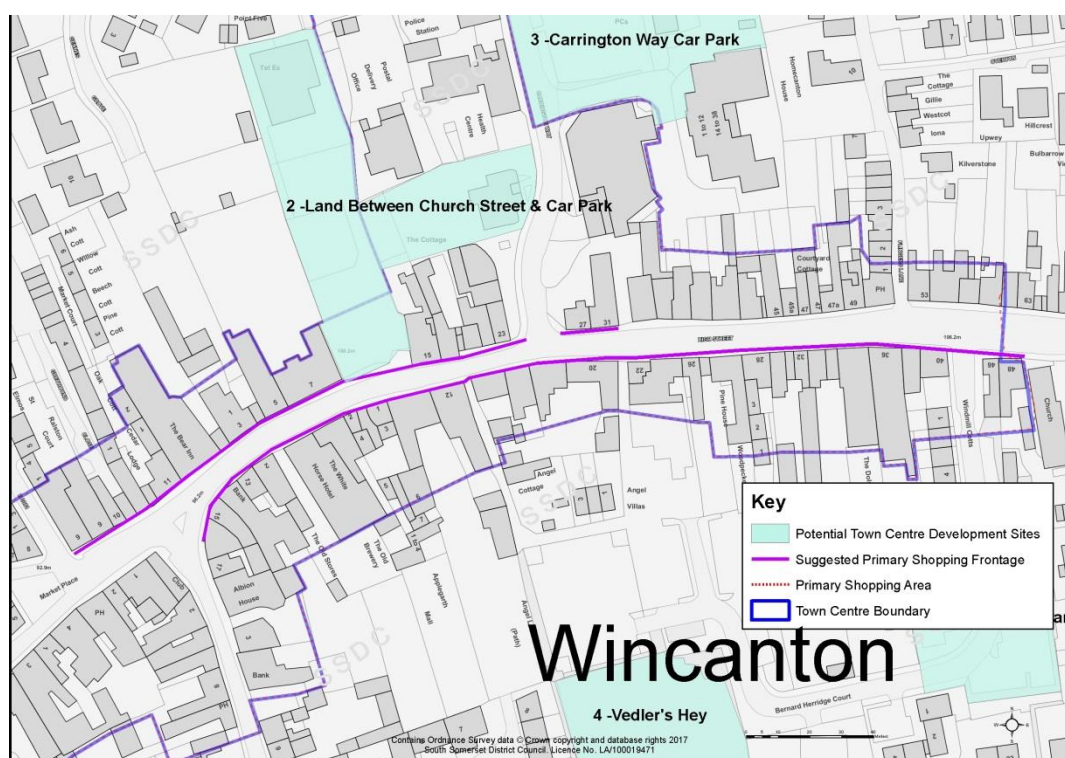
7.18(a) Allocate Land Between Church Street and Car Park for Town Centre Uses

7.18(b) Do not allocate land for development of Town Centre Uses outside Wincanton Town Centre but explore the options within and adjoining the existing Town Centre boundary further.

7.18(c) Another option

7.114 The Local Plan does not identify a Primary Shopping Frontage for Wincanton; this designation controls changes of use from town centre uses to non-town centre uses in these locations. The aim being to retain vitality and viability. The Retail and Main Town Centres Uses Study provides a suggested frontage (the blue dots) extending along the High Street from Wincanton Methodist Church to the Town Hall.

Figure 7.26: Suggested Wincanton Primary Shopping Frontage



Source: South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study, 2017

- 7.115 The residents of Wincanton are keen to maintain and improve their town centre and this is one of the aims of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan.

Question 7.19

Do you agree with the suggested Primary Shopping Frontage for Wincanton?

Infrastructure

- 7.116 The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)⁹¹ shows that the development proposed for Wincanton in the Local Plan is unlikely to result in abnormal or fundamental infrastructure constraints relating to transport, flood risk and drainage, utilities, telecommunications, waste and recycling, and emergency services.
- 7.117 New housing does generate a need for additional open space and outdoor play space, sports, community, and cultural facilities; although the timing of this is not fundamental to delivering development
- 7.118 In recent years Wincanton has benefitted from a new primary healthcare centre and pharmacy on the New Barns Farm site, although there are some local concerns regarding capacity.
- 7.119 A new teaching block at Wincanton County Primary School providing an additional eight classrooms is under construction with completion expected in autumn 2017.
- 7.120 The infrastructure providers are being consulted as part of the LPR process and any additional infrastructure required to meet future growth will be identified.

Question 7.20

In addition to the infrastructure described above, are there any other infrastructure requirements for Wincanton?

Local Market Towns – Ansford & Castle Cary

Spatial Portrait

- 7.121 The combined settlement of Ansford & Castle Cary is in the east of the District and lies on the southern edge of the Somerset Levels beside the River Cary. The settlement has a combined population of 3,361⁹². It benefits from a main line train station located to the north of the town with services on the London Paddington to Penzance line.

⁹¹ South Somerset Infrastructure Delivery Plan Update 2015/16 Part One – Spatial Summary
https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/814403/idp_2015_16_part_1_issue.pdf

⁹² Census 2011, BUA

- 7.122 It is an attractive market town with four Conservation Areas and many listed buildings. It has a vibrant and attractive town centre with a number of independent retailers and eateries which serve a wider rural hinterland. The town's major employers are located on the Torbay Road Industrial Estate and include Centaur Services and Royal Canin.
- 7.123 The landscape around Castle Cary is very constrained with large areas of the surrounding land being identified as having a low capacity to accommodate built development.⁹³
- 7.124 Production of the Castle Cary and Ansford Neighbourhood Plan is ongoing. In summary the aims of the Neighbourhood Plan are to:
- Support the level of new dwellings required by the Local Plan, particularly focused on the re-development or re-use of the brownfield sites within the existing urban area.
 - Ensure that new housing developments are of good quality, are energy efficient, have a low environmental impact as possible and provide a good level of affordable housing to meet local needs with a mix of shared ownership/tenancy types.
 - Ensure new housing provision, employment growth and provision of roads and additional community facilities progress in an integrated manner, so that the growing community is supported by the necessary infrastructure.
 - Support an environment in which enterprise can flourish and broaden the employment base of the Town. Encourage the early development of serviced sites within allocated employment land and allow the Town to attract new employers and create new jobs for local people of all ages.
 - Support increased tourism to the Town and wider area.
 - Support, encourage and promote a range of shops and businesses in the town centre, protect the market, and maintain the free parking and public toilets.
 - Better manage traffic movements through the Town Centre to improve safety and limit congestion, and as far as possible promote and support safe travel for all: public transport, cycle paths, footpaths and rights of way, parking provision, traffic calming schemes and safer roads linking to the Town centre shops, schools and railway station.
 - Foster and promote opportunities for education, training, cultural stimulation and fun - for people of all ages.
 - Maintain and enhance the green spaces within both parishes for the enjoyment of all, and protect the surrounding historic countryside and allow wildlife to thrive.
 - Preserve the area's heritage and pleasing ambience and keep it a pleasant place in which to live, work or visit.

Housing

- 7.125 Local Plan Policy SS5 (Delivering New Housing Growth) states that Ansford & Castle Cary should deliver 374 new dwellings over the Plan period. A Direction of Growth is identified to the north of the settlement (Policy LMT 1).
- 7.126 The existing planning policy framework, including the lack of a five-year supply of housing land and recent appeal decisions has meant that planning permission has been granted for a number of dwellings far exceeding the Local Plan requirement. The majority of these

⁹³ Peripheral Landscape Study – Ansford and Castle Cary

new residential planning permissions are located within the Direction of Growth and form part of the existing commitments in Figure 7.27.

Figure 7.27: Housing Completions and Commitments

	Dwellings
Net Completions (01/04/06 to 31/03/17)	68
Existing Commitments (as at 31/03/17)	523
Total	591

Source: SSDC Monitoring Database

- 7.127 The BMI site at Cumnock Road is a large brownfield site within the development area of the settlement. Planning permission for residential development was granted on the site in 2004, although this has now lapsed. The Council believes that the site has not come forward due to issues surrounding viability; however, there has recently been renewed interest in the site. The site is located within the Development Area which means there is no reason why a planning policy compliant proposal could not come forward at any time.
- 7.128 The site allocation for around 30 dwellings on land west of Remalard Court⁹⁴ (HG/CACA/2) is proving difficult to deliver. Planning permission for a scheme was refused in 2015⁹⁵ and another this year⁹⁶ for reasons of access. The long-term failure to deliver this site raises the question of whether the allocation should continue to be carried forward.

Question 7.21

Due to long-term non-delivery should housing allocation HG/CACA/2 (Land west of Remalard Court) be deleted?

Employment

- 7.129 Local Plan Policy SS3 (Delivering New Employment Land) identifies a requirement for 8.9 additional hectares (ha)⁹⁷ of employment land in Ansford & Castle Cary over the Plan period; the expectation is that the growth will primarily be delivered within the Direction of Growth. There is currently outline planning permission for 2ha of employment land within the Direction of Growth⁹⁸.
- 7.130 Ansford & Castle Cary has delivered the highest amount of land and floorspace in Area East and of all the settlements in the District. Nearly all the land and floorspace losses were to residential use.
- 7.131 Some key developments in Ansford & Castle Cary have been on the Torbay Road Industrial Estate and include the completion of the Royal Canin pet food factory, the

⁹⁴ The site is known locally as Foxes Run

⁹⁵ Planning application 14/04031/OUT

⁹⁶ Planning application 16/03447/FUL for 27 dwellings

⁹⁷ In addition to the commitments, overall requirement being 18.97 hectares

⁹⁸ Planning application 15/02347/OUT

erection of a large workshop and an extension to Centaur Services. Figure 7.28 summarises the position as at 31 March 2017.

Figure 7.28: Ansford & Castle Cary Economic Development as at 31 March 2017

	Land (Hectares) (Net)	Floorspace (Square Metres) (Net)
Complete	8.91	16,313
Under Construction	0.0	484
Not Yet Started	1.77	-1,630
Total	10.68	15,167
Local Plan Requirement	18.97	
Residual Requirement	8.29	

Source: SSDC Monitoring Database

- 7.132 The HELAA shows that there is a suitable, available and achievable site for mixed use in the Direction of Growth for Ansford & Castle Cary, amounting to 0.85ha of land and 3,400m² of floorspace.
- 7.133 Based on the current evidence, Figure 7.29 identifies options for additional growth at Ansford & Castle Cary.

Figure 7.29: Options for growth at Ansford & Castle Cary

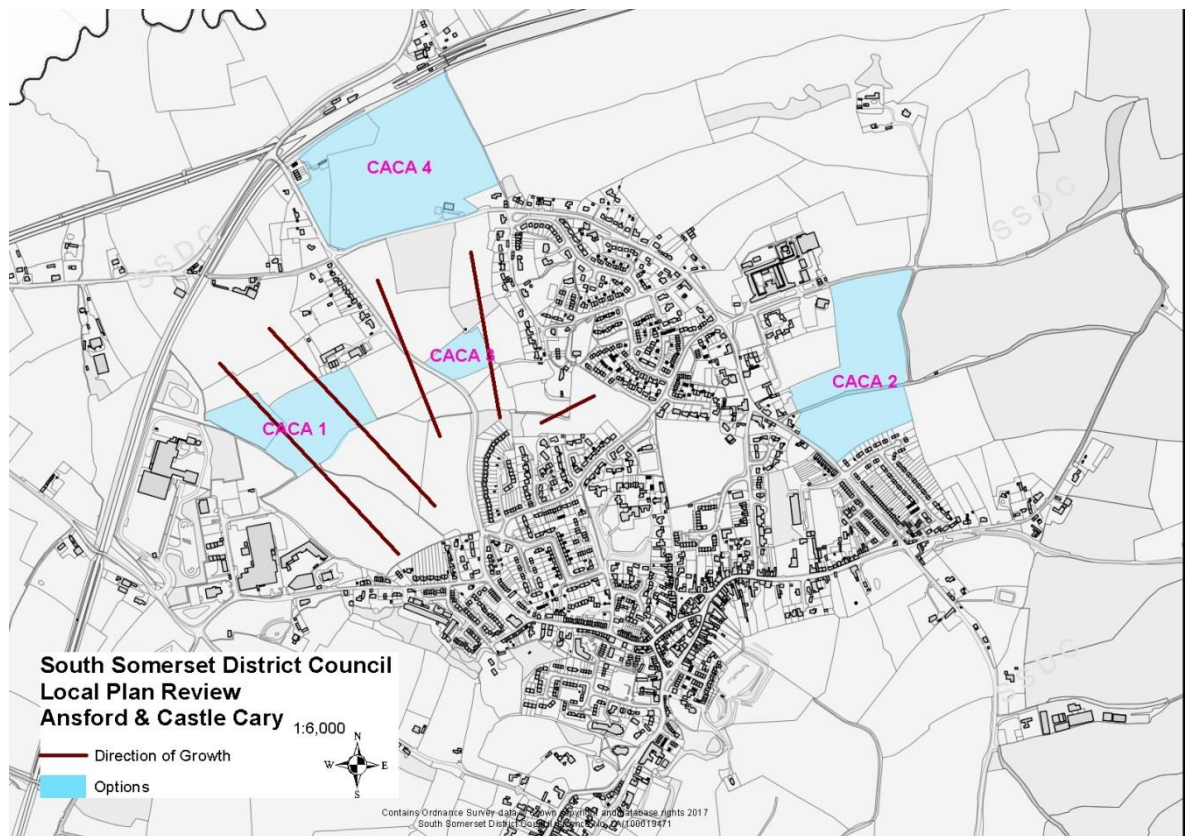
Option	Location	Comments / Constraints
ANSF/CACA 1	Land north-west of Ansford	<p>This option is within the Direction of Growth for Ansford & Castle Cary and is promoted through the HELAA (E/ANSF/0008).</p> <p>Access to the site would need to be agreed.</p> <p>The site is partially within in a Mineral Safeguarding Area and is BMV agricultural land. Rights of way cross the site.</p> <p>The site has the potential to accommodate around 60 dwellings and 0.85 ha of employment land.</p>
ANSF/CACA 2	Land at Higher Ansford	<p>This option links HELAA site E/ANSF/0010 with land to east which was not promoted through the HELAA but is identified in the Peripheral Landscape Study⁹⁹ as having a high and moderate/high capacity to accommodate built development.</p> <p>A small part of the site is within the Conservation Area with the remainder adjoining. It is also partly within an area of High Archaeological Potential.</p> <p>The site is BMV agricultural land.</p>

⁹⁹ Peripheral Landscape Study – Castle Cary/Ansford, March 2008

https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/230784/peripheral%20landscape%20study_castle%20cary.pdf

		The site has the potential to accommodate around 120 dwellings.
ANSF/CACA 3	Land east of Station Road	<p>This option is within the Direction of Growth and forms part of HELAA site E/ANSF/0007.</p> <p>The peripheral Landscape Study identifies the land as having a moderate capacity to accommodate built development.</p> <p>The site is BMV agricultural land.</p> <p>The site has the potential to accommodate around 20 dwellings.</p>
ANSF/CACA 4	Land north of Ansford Hill	<p>This option is north of the existing Direction of Growth and extends towards the train station. It was not promoted through the HELAA process.</p> <p>The site is BMV agricultural land. The peripheral Landscape Study identifies the land as having a moderate capacity to accommodate built development.</p> <p>An area of High Archaeological Potential adjoins the site at the edge of the south-eastern corner.</p> <p>The site has the potential to accommodate around 180 dwellings.</p>

Figure 7.30: Ansford & Castle Cary Options



Question 7.22

Which of the following options should be taken forward in the LPR?

Option 7.22

Options for growth at Ansford & Castle Cary include:

- 7.22(a)** ANSF/CACA 1: Land north-west of Ansford for mixed use
- 7.22(b)** ANSF/CACA 2: Land at Higher Ansford for housing
- 7.22(c)** ANSF/CACA 3: Land east of Station Road for housing
- 7.22(d)** ANSF/CACA 4: Land north of Ansford Hill for housing
- 7.22(e)** Another option (please specify)

Retailing

- 7.134 The settlement of Ansford & Castle Cary is identified as a District Centre in the Local Plan. The Retail and Main Town Centres Uses Study¹⁰⁰ identifies that it has a below national average vacancy rate (10.1% compared to 11.2% in 2017). The town centre is located within one of the Conservation Areas and this means the public realm is high quality.
- 7.135 There is a Co-op convenience store located within the town centre and the local community are keen to retain the convenience offer in the town centre location. Local Plan Policy EP12 (Floorspace Threshold for Impact Assessments) requires an impact assessment to be undertaken for proposals of 250m² or more for town centre development in out of centre locations.
- 7.136 The quantitative assessment of potential capacity for retail floorspace suggests the following for Ansford & Castle Cary:

Figure 7.31: Retail Floorspace Capacity in Ansford & Castle Cary 2017-2034 (sq. m. gross)

Type	By 2024	By 2029	By 2034 (Total capacity over Plan period)
Convenience	712	737	761
Comparison	97	228	361
Food and Beverage	25	74	122

Source: South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study, 2017

- 7.137 The capacity for the expansion of the retail offer in Ansford & Castle Cary is modest (somewhere between a large convenience store and small supermarket) and would be expected to be focussed upon the Town Centre.
- 7.138 In July 2017, Barclays Bank announced that it will be closing the Castle Cary branch in October 2017¹⁰¹.

Infrastructure

- 7.139 The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)¹⁰² shows that the development proposed for Ansford & Castle Cary in the Local Plan is unlikely to result in abnormal or fundamental infrastructure constraints relating to flood risk and drainage, utilities, telecommunications, waste and recycling, and emergency services.
- 7.140 With regards to health, the Millbrook Practice has experienced a significant increase in patient numbers since 2014, giving a higher than usual patient to GP ratio. Some funding has been secured to improve overall space standards.
- 7.141 Ansford & Castle Cary has one primary school and one secondary school, albeit with no sixth form provision. There is capacity within Castle Cary Primary School to meet the

¹⁰⁰ South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study, Lichfields, 2017

¹⁰¹ <http://www.somersetlive.co.uk/news/somerset-news/closure-towns-final-bank-could-236908>

¹⁰² South Somerset Infrastructure Delivery Plan Update 2015/16 Part One – Spatial Summary
https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/814403/idp_2015_16_part_1_issue.pdf

initial demand from development. A feasibility study may need to be commissioned to see if further expansion is possible at this school. Somerset County Council is considering options for the provision of additional accommodation in the longer term. Planning permission 15/02347/OUT includes land identified as a potential site for a new primary school.

Question 7.23

In addition to the infrastructure described above, are there any other infrastructure requirements for Ansford & Castle Cary?

Local Market Towns – Langport & Huish Episcopi

Spatial Portrait

- 7.142 The combined settlement of Langport & Huish Episcopi is in the north of the District, positioned on the banks of the River Parrett and on the edge of the Somerset Levels and Moors. The historic settlement has many listed buildings, mainly clustered in its town centre Conservation Area. This historic character of the settlement, along with opportunities to walk, cycle, and ride horses, particularly along the Parrett Trail, makes the settlement an attractive tourist destination.
- 7.143 Langport & Huish Episcopi has a population of 3,063¹⁰³ people. The settlement also has a wide hinterland that relates to it for amenities – retailers, eateries, schools, and community facilities.

Housing

- 7.144 Policy SS5 (Delivering New Housing Growth) sets a housing target of at least 374 dwellings to be delivered in the Plan period. Policy LMT2 (Langport/ Huish Episcopi Direction of Growth) directs housing growth to the north and east, with a different Direction of Growth (DoG) to the south-east for employment uses.
- 7.145 Monitoring shows that 297 dwellings have been delivered, leaving a residual figure of 77 to meet the target. One-hundred-and-fifty-two housing commitments remain, suggesting that the settlement is likely to meet and could surpass its target by 2028.

Figure 7.32: Housing Delivery (Net)

Housing Commitments	Dwellings
Net Completions (01/04/06 to 31/03/17)	297
Existing Commitments (as at 31/03/17)	152
Total	449

Source: SSDC Monitoring Database

¹⁰³ NOMIS Built-up Area data, <http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk/bua-maps.html?fontsize=large>

7.146 In 2015, a planning application¹⁰⁴ for residential development within the housing DoG was refused and later upheld at appeal¹⁰⁵ due to the proposed development's adverse impacts on a heritage asset. On that basis, it is suggested that the site is not taken forward as an allocation.

Question 7.24

Do you agree that the site within the northern Direction of Growth (Policy LMT2) that was subject to the planning application refusal, later upheld at appeal, should not be taken forward as an allocation?

7.147 The HELAA¹⁰⁶ identified no suitable sites for residential development.

Figure 7.33: Options for Housing and Employment Growth at Langport & Huish Episcopi

Option	Location	Comments / Constraints
LANG 1	Land Between Somerton Road and Wearne Lane	<p>This site is within the Langport/ Huish Episcopi Direction of Growth as broadly defined in the Local Plan. From a landscape perspective, it has a moderate capacity to accommodate built-form, and has an estimated capacity to accommodate around 105 dwellings.</p> <p>Approximately 40% of the site is BMV agricultural land.</p> <p>This land was not identified through the HELAA process.</p>
LANG 2	Land Between Somerton Road and Field Road	<p>This site is also within the Direction of Growth. The in-fill site has an estimated capacity to accommodate about 45 dwellings.</p> <p>The site is BMV agricultural land with a right of way that runs along its western boundary.</p> <p>The site was not identified as part of the HELAA process but has been subject to an approved outline planning application¹⁰⁷ for residential development, and, at the time of writing, there is a full planning application¹⁰⁸ pending for 94 dwellings.</p>

¹⁰⁴ Application ref. 14/05234/OUT

¹⁰⁵ Appeal ref. APP/R3325/W/15/3136302

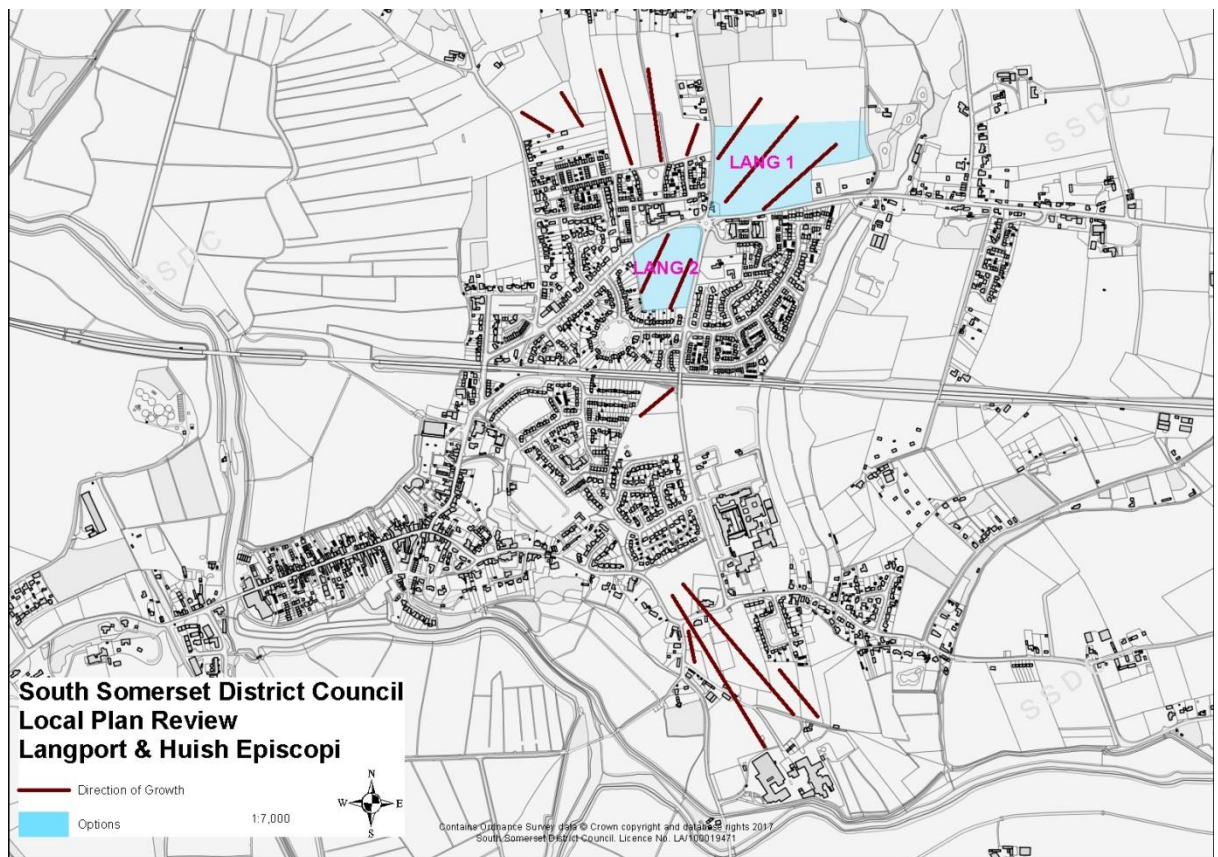
¹⁰⁶ South Somerset Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment, 2017

<https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/early-review-of-local-plan-2006-2028/project-management--monitoring/south-somerset-housing-and-employment-land-availability-assessment/>

¹⁰⁷ 13/03483/OUT

¹⁰⁸ 17/02694/FUL

Figure 7.34: Langport & Huish Episcopi Options



Question 7.25

Which of the following options should be taken forward through the LPR?

Option 7.25

Options for housing growth at Langport/ Huish Episcopi include:

7.18(a) LANG 1: Land between Somerton Road and Wearne Lane

7.18(b) LANG 2: Land between Somerton Road and Field Road

7.18(c) Another option (please specify)

Employment

7.148 Policy SS3 (Delivering New Employment Land) sets a target for 4.01ha of employment land to be delivered in Langport by 2028. Policy LMT2 (Langport and Huish Episcopi Direction of Growth) places a direction of employment land growth to the south-east of the settlement.

7.149 Monitoring shows that the majority of land delivered for employment was in connection with North Street Surgery extension (0.1 hectares for D1 use) in 2010. At the time of writing, the only economic development application located in the DoG is a helicopter landing pad associated to an existing industrial use at the Tanyard Lane industrial site.

7.150 The existing main employment areas in Langport & Huish Episcopi are located at:

- Tanyard Lane
- Westover Trading Estate

7.151 Langport & Huish Episcopi has delivered the least net employment land and net employment floorspace of the three Local Market Towns. If all the 'not started' and 'under construction' developments are completed, which is unlikely given past monitored performance, the settlement still would not be on track to meet its target.

Figure 7.35: Langport & Huish Episcopi Economic Development as at 31 March 2017

	Land (Hectares) (Net)	Floorspace (Square Metres) (Net)
Complete	0.04	1,325
Under Construction	-0.07	-589
Not Yet Started	0.95	2,987
Total	0.91	3,723
Local Plan Requirement	4.01	
Residual Requirement	3.1	

Source: SSDC Monitoring Database

7.152 The delivery of floorspace has been fairly consistent in the town since 2006. Much of the development has been to change the uses of land; therefore, new net floorspace has been quite modest. Most of the new additional floorspace in the town has been delivered through the Great Bow Yard offices, community space and a café development, and additional classrooms at Huish Academy. Due to Langport's role as a tourist destination, most of the employment growth has been in the service and leisure sector¹⁰⁹.

7.153 No employment sites were identified in the HELAA. A scheme was submitted in the HELAA for mixed use development in the south-east DoG. Policy LMT2 placed the DoG to the south-east solely for employment to avoid conflict between residential uses and wildlife; as such, the mixed use development is not suggested as an option.

7.154 Having further considered the on-site constraints, the south-east DoG may be unsuitable for economic development due to its sensitive historic environment and access issues.

Question 7.26

Should the Direction of Growth to the south-east of the settlement be removed?

¹⁰⁹SSDC Monitoring Database

Retailing

- 7.155 The Retail and Main Town Centres Uses Study¹¹⁰ highlights the link between town centre businesses and the settlement's role as a tourist destination.
- 7.156 The historic town centre has narrow highways, significantly limiting on-street parking. There are however four well-located car parks and a regular bus service to serve town centre visitors.
- 7.157 The town centre vacancy rate is 3.9%, significantly below the national average of 11.2%. Its good range of comparison units and low vacancy rate suggest that the town centre is healthy.
- 7.158 The Study's projected retail floorspace capacity for Langport & Huish Episcopi is shown in Figure 7.36.

Figure 7.36: Projected Retail Floorspace Capacity in Langport & Huish Episcopi (sq. m. gross)

Type	By 2024	By 2029	By 2034 (Total capacity over Plan period)
Convenience	778	827	874
Comparison	25	60	95
Food and Beverage	16	47	77

Source: South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study, 2017

- 7.159 This suggests a modest amount of growth in the 'comparison' and 'food and beverage' sectors and a reasonable capacity for additional facilities. In accordance with the Study, it is not considered necessary to allocate any sites to meet the projected capacity.
- 7.160 No town centre or retail issues have been identified.

Infrastructure

- 7.161 The IDP¹¹¹ states that the growth proposed for Langport & Huish Episcopi is unlikely to result in abnormal or fundamental infrastructure constraints relating to transport, telecommunications, emergency services, health care, waste and recycling, or other utilities. The education and healthcare service providers are preparing capacity studies which may highlight issues in due course.
- 7.162 New housing will generate a need for additional open space and outdoor play space, sports, community and cultural facilities, although the timing of this is not fundamental to delivering development.
- 7.163 Being located on the banks of the River Parrett, fluvial flooding is a significant risk for parts for the settlement. Planning permission has been granted on the Westover Trading Estate for a scheme which includes raising parts of the estate road by up to 0.8m. Additional flood risk infrastructure is required to better manage flood risk. The

¹¹⁰ South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centres Uses Study

¹¹¹ South Somerset Infrastructure Delivery Plan Update 2015/16 Part One – Spatial Summary
https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/814403/idp_2015_16_part_1_issue.pdf

Environment Agency has already considered an embankment scheme which may provide a comprehensive solution for the future.

- 7.164 Wessex Water has completed a capacity scheme at Langport Sewage Treatment Works, but further work may be required.
- 7.165 There is local political pressure for the Langport railway station to be opened. However, no feasibility work has been undertaken and it is not a corporate priority.
- 7.166 Infrastructure providers are being consulted as part of the LPR process and any additional infrastructure required to meet future growth will be identified.

Question 7.27

In addition to the infrastructure described above, are there any other infrastructure requirements for Langport & Huish Episcopi?

Local Market Towns – Somerton

Spatial Portrait

- 7.167 Somerton is an historic settlement with a population of 4,339¹¹². It is located in the north of the District, on the B3151, B3153, and B3165.
- 7.168 In the east of the settlement is the designated Conservation Area and historic town centre with a high quality public realm and a number of retailers and eateries. Much of the recent housing and employment growth has been to the west of the settlement.

Housing

- 7.169 Policy SS5 (Delivering New Housing Growth) gives Somerton a target of delivering 374 dwellings, and Policy LMT3 (Somerton Direction of Growth) directs growth to the west of the town.
- 7.170 Monitoring shows that Somerton has delivered less than a third of its housing target, leaving 266 dwellings still to be delivered. However, the significantly increased rate of delivery over the last two years along with a high number of commitments suggests that there remains potential to achieve the target.

Figure 7.37: Housing Delivery (Net)

Housing Commitments	Dwellings
Net Completions (01/04/06 to 31/03/17)	108
Existing Commitments (as at 31/03/17)	336
Total	474

Source: SSDC Monitoring Database

¹¹² NOMIS Built-up Area data, <http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk/bua-maps.html?fontsize=large>

7.171 The HELAA¹¹³ identifies five sites with potential for housing or mixed use development in Somerton.

Employment

7.172 Policy SS3 (Delivering New Employment Land) seeks 6.63ha of employment land to be delivered in Somerton by 2028, and Policy LMT3 seeks development to be achieved in the DoG, to the west of the settlement.

7.173 The main employment area in Somerton is the Bancombe Road trading estate. The Badgers Cross Lane industrial estate has experienced considerable growth recently but is classed as outside Somerton, falling in the 'Rest of District' area for monitoring purposes. It is only a mile from the centre of Somerton and therefore has a very strong relationship with the town.

7.174 Connections onto the B3151, B3153 and B3165, proximity to the A303, and the existing infrastructure associated with its trading estates all draw businesses into the area.

7.175 So far in the Plan period, planning applications for employment land have been limited. The delivery of economic land and floorspace can mostly be attributed to the expansion of the Bancombe Road trading estate. Delivery since 2007/8 has been limited; this could potentially be due to the fact that there is no employment land allocation for Somerton, only a DoG which can be developed for either employment or residential purposes. Consultation with developers has revealed that the DoG approach provides the possibility of residential land values for landowners and inflates the overall value of land, making employment land, which is already financially difficult, even more so¹¹⁴.

Figure 7.38: Somerton Economic Development as at 31 March 2017

	Land (Hectares) (Net)	Floorspace (Square Metres) (Net)
Complete	1.17	9,664
Under Construction	0	0
Not Yet Started	0.01	1,498
Total	1.18	11,162
Local Plan Requirement	6.63	
Residual Requirement	5.45	

Source: SSDC Monitoring Database

7.176 Monitoring¹¹⁵ shows that Somerton is not achieving well against its employment land target; as at March 2017 it had completed around a fifth of its target. Development under construction (0) and not yet started (0.01) make no real contribution to the settlement achieving its target.

¹¹³ South Somerset Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment, 2017
<https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/early-review-of-local-plan-2006-2028/project-management-monitoring/south-somerset-housing-and-employment-land-availability-assessment/>

¹¹⁴ South Somerset Employment Land Evidence: Review of FEMAs and Understanding Market Trends

¹¹⁵ Economic Development Monitoring Report: Land and Floorspace Delivered in South Somerset (April 2017)

- 7.177 Floorspace delivery paints a healthier picture of employment infrastructure and shows an intensification of employment use on existing employment land rather than an increase in employment land. This intensification of employment land is a District trend, but in Somerton it may also be associated with the aforementioned increase in residential hope value on land surrounding the Bancombe Road trading estate, causing economic development viability difficulties.
- 7.178 The HELAA¹¹⁶ identifies no potential sites for solely employment use. One potential site for mixed use is located in the DoG, to the east of the Bancombe Road trading estate.

Figure 7.39: Options for Housing and Employment Growth at Somerton

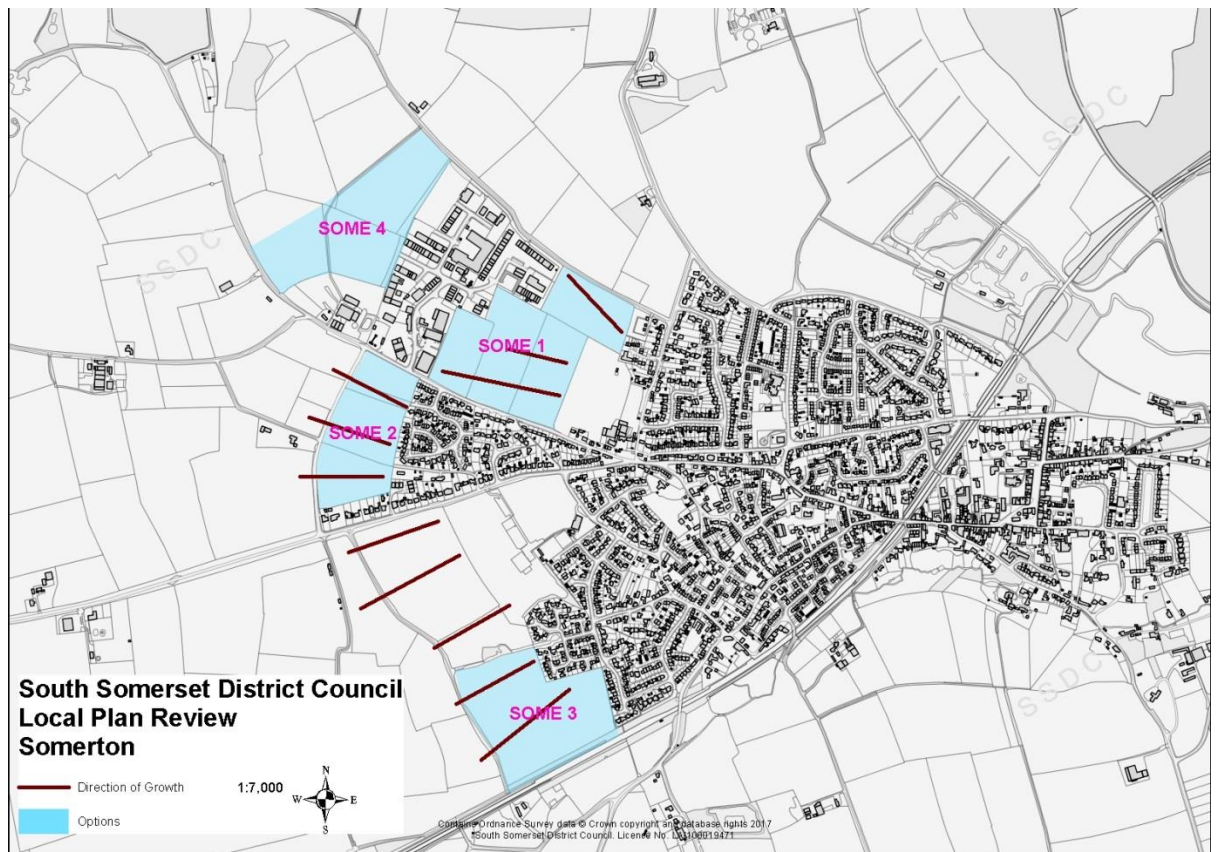
Option	Location	Comments / Constraints
SOME 1	Bancombe Road	<p>This option comprises three contiguous sites (N/SOME/0006, N/SOME/0007, and N/SOME/0008) which were identified as being available, suitable, and developable, in the HELAA process. Two of the sites were proposed solely for housing and the other was proposed for mixed use.</p> <p>To allow the expansion of the Bancombe Road trading estate, it is likely that economic development would be better suited to the west of the Option site, leaving land further way, to the east, for residential development.</p> <p>The site has a high capacity to accommodate built form from a landscape standpoint. From a mixed-use scenario, the site could accommodate around 95 dwellings and 5.2ha of economic development land. For solely economic development, the site has capacity for 10.4ha of economic development land.</p> <p>At the time of writing, there is an outline planning application¹¹⁷ pending for the erection of nine dwellings and an extension to existing business park.</p>
SOME 2	Land off Cartway Lane	<p>The site is located within the Direction of Growth to the west of the settlement, adjacent to the development area.</p> <p>Only a middle portion of the proposed site was submitted as available land in the HELAA.</p> <p>The site is bounded by Bancombe Road to the north and Cartway Lane to the west; to the south is the linear development which follows Langport Road and to the west is the residential development of Parklands Way. The site has a high to moderate-high capacity for built form from a landscape perspective. The site has an estimated capacity to accommodate 105 dwellings.</p>

¹¹⁶ South Somerset Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment, 2017
<https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/early-review-of-local-plan-2006-2028/project-management--monitoring/south-somerset-housing-and-employment-land-availability-assessment/>

¹¹⁷ 17/02850/OUT

SOME 3	Land West of St Cleers Orchard	<p>This site is within the Somerton Direction of Growth. The middle part of the site, which came forward in the HELAA (N/SOME/0005), has outline planning permission¹¹⁸ for up to 59 dwellings and is currently subject to an application to vary the associated S106 Agreement.</p> <p>From a landscape standpoint, the site contains land with high capacity to accommodate built form, and could accommodate around 135 dwellings.</p> <p>A right of way runs through the site, and the railway line runs along its southern boundary. Consideration to the amenity impacts of the railway line would need to be considered; this has potential to reduce the housing yield of the site.</p>
SOME 4	Land North-west of Bancombe Trading Estate	<p>This site is located beyond the Somerton Direction of Growth, on the north-east boundary of the Bancombe Road trading estate. The site could yield approximately 8.4ha of economic development land, which could allow the Trading Estate to grow.</p> <p>The site was not identified through the HELAA process.</p>

Figure 7.40: Somerton Options



¹¹⁸ 15/03585/OUT

Question 7.28

Which of the following options should be taken forward through the LPR?

Options 7.28

Options for growth at Somerton include:

7.28(a) SOME 1: Bancombe Road for a mixed use

7.28(b) SOME 1: Bancombe Road for economic development

7.28(c) SOME 2: Land off Cartway Lane for housing

7.28(d) SOME 3: Land west of St Cleers Orchard for housing

7.28(e) SOME4: Land north-west of Bancombe Trading Estate for economic development

7.28(f) Another option (please specify)

Retailing

7.179 The Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study¹¹⁹ identifies that Somerton has the joint highest vacancy rate in the District, with Wincanton. The settlement is fairly self-contained and the results of the household survey indicate that it retains 75% of convenience shopping and 60% of comparison shopping. As expected, most of the expenditure leakage is to Yeovil.

7.180 The Study highlights that the town centre is a high quality public realm with an expenditure surplus that could support future provision improvements, which should be met primarily through the reoccupation of vacant units.

Figure 7.41: Projected Retail Floorspace Capacity in Somerton (sq. m. gross)

Type	By 2024	By 2029	By 2034 Total over Plan Period)
Convenience	278	305	331
Comparison	62	146	232
Food and Beverage	45	136	225

Source: South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study, 2017

7.181 Somerton is the largest of the designated District Centres, with a similar number of commercial units to Ilminster and Wincanton Market Towns. Conversely, its overall retail sales floorspace provision is significantly lower and Somerton should therefore remain a designated District Centre.

7.182 There are no town centre and retail issues for Somerton.

¹¹⁹ South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centres Uses Study

Infrastructure

- 7.183 The IDP shows that the development proposed in the Local Plan for Somerton is unlikely to result in abnormal or fundamental infrastructure constraints relating to telecommunications, waste and recycling, education, healthcare, and emergency services.
- 7.184 New housing will generate a need for additional open space and outdoor play space, sports, community and cultural facilities; although the timing of those facilities is not fundamental to delivering development.
- 7.185 An infrastructural priority for Somerton is the provision of new junction arrangements to access the residential development site at Northfield Farm on Bancombe Road and Langport Road. The site now has the benefit of planning permission, including the creation of the access.
- 7.186 Relevant infrastructure providers are being consulted as part of the LPR process and any additional infrastructure required to meet future growth will be identified.

Question 7.29

In addition to the infrastructure described above, are there any other infrastructure requirements for Somerton?

8. Rural Centres

Current Approach

- 8.1 The Local Plan identifies six Rural Centres: Bruton, Ilchester, Martock & Bower Hinton, Milborne Port, South Petherton, and Stoke sub Hamdon.
- 8.2 These are settlements that act as focal points for the surrounding area for retail and community service provision and in some instances have an employment role. The strategy requires these settlements to accommodate some housing and employment growth. Community facilities and services, which meet the needs of the settlement and surrounding areas, are also encouraged.
- 8.3 The key issues and options for each of these Rural Centres are discussed below.

Rural Centres - Bruton

Spatial Portrait

- 8.4 Bruton is a Rural Centre with Saxon origins. It is situated in the east of the District, in the Brue Valley a few miles north of the A303, about 4 miles from Castle Cary and 7 miles from Shepton Mallet. The A351 Frome-Yeovil road passes through the settlement and the B3081 crosses the river at Church Bridge. Today, the two main economic activities are farming and education. There are four schools in Bruton: King's School, founded in 1519 and Bruton School for Girls, which are both independent; Sexey's School; a co-educational 11-18 state boarding and day school; and Bruton Primary School.
- 8.5 Over 50% of the settlement's economically active residents travel to work outside the ward, mainly to settlements in Mendip, Wincanton and the surrounding villages, making the level of self-containment low. The settlement has a resident population of 2984 people¹²⁰. The opening of the 'At The Chapel' restaurant and the 'Hauser and Wirth' Art Gallery has boosted the vitality of the town and encourages visitors.
- 8.6 A large proportion of the town centre and to the south of the River Brue is designated a Conservation Area.

Housing

- 8.7 Local Plan Policy SS5 (Delivering New Housing Growth) states that Bruton should deliver 203 new dwellings over the Plan period. Figure 8.1 shows that to date, there have been 185 completions or commitments, leaving an outstanding requirement for just 18 new dwellings.

¹²⁰ Census 2011 (Bruton BUA)

Figure 8.1: Housing Delivery (Net)

	Dwellings
Net Completions (01/04/06 to 31/03/17)	109
Existing Commitments (as at 31/03/17)	76
Total	185

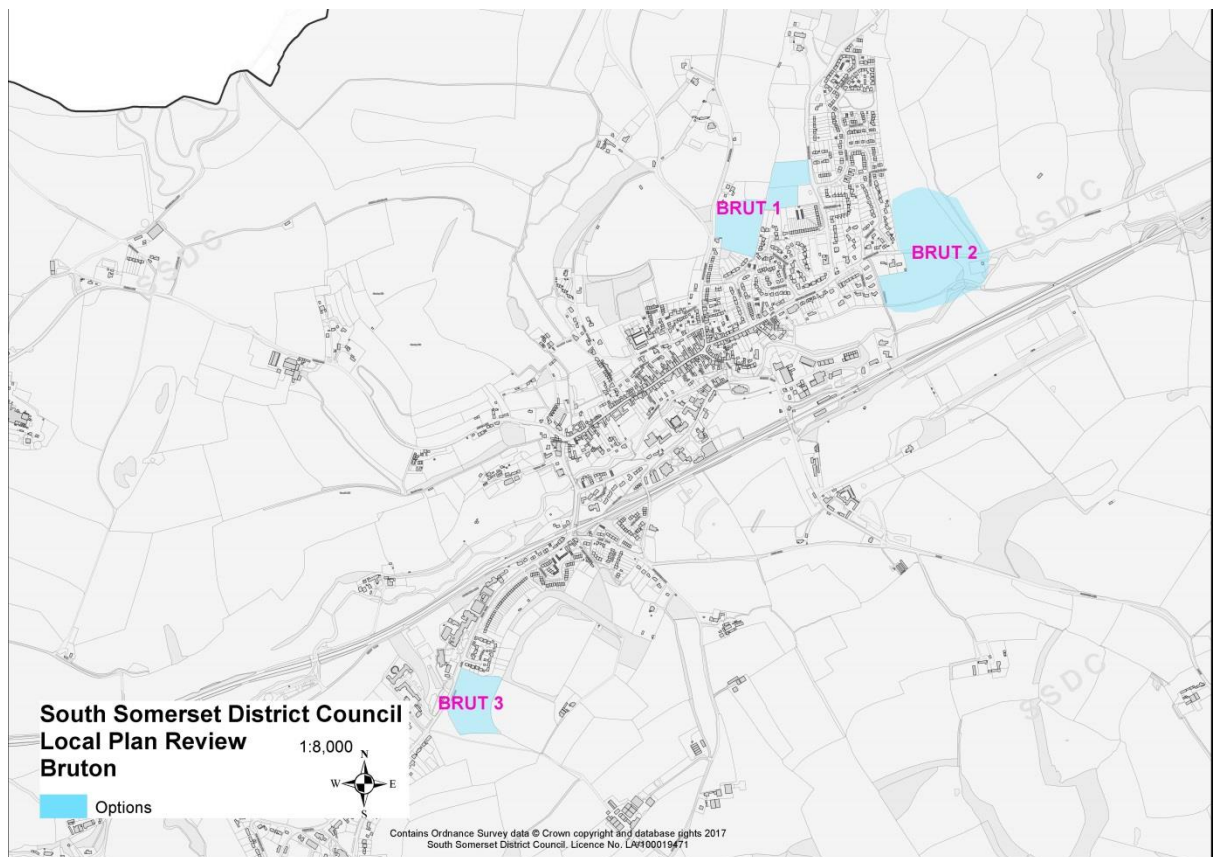
Source: SSDC Monitoring Database

- 8.8 The HELAA (2017) identifies one site that would deliver further growth within five years, to the west of Frome Road.
- 8.9 Although 'Bruton – the Way Forward' is no longer in existence, a Town Plan Resident Survey was undertaken by the Town Council in the Autumn of 2016, and a Town Plan has now been produced. At the time of writing, it is expected that District Council Members will endorse the Plan. Other sites suggested as potentially suitable for development mentioned in the Survey were land at Brewham Road and Cole Road.
- 8.10 Perhaps unsurprisingly, there was strong local support in the Survey to protect the Historic Centre, Jubilee Park and the Tolbury/ Duckpond area from development.

Figure 8.2: Options for Housing Growth at Bruton

Option	Location	Comments / Constraints
BRUT 1	Land west of Frome Road	This site to the north of the town has gradients which would probably limit the extent of development, but could be expected to deliver five dwellings. The site is adjacent to the site on which a new doctor's surgery has been granted permission. The option is located within BMV agricultural land.
BRUT 2	Land at Brewham Road	These are potential housing sites to the north or south of the road, to the east of the town. The Bruton Peripheral Landscape Study identifies the sites as either having moderate or high capacity to accommodate development. The site might be expected to deliver about 100 dwellings. The option is located within BMV agricultural land. The southernmost part of the site is within Flood Zone 2 and 3. The site was not identified through the HELAA process.
BRUT 3	Land east of Cole Road	A site on the south-western periphery of the town, near to the Sexey's School, identified as having capacity to accommodate development. The site might be expected to deliver about 35 dwellings. The option is located within BMV agricultural land. The site was not identified through the HELAA process.

Figure 8.3: Bruton Options



Question 8.1

Which of the following options should be taken forward through the LPR?

Options 8.1

Options for housing growth at Bruton include:

8.1(a) BRUT 1: Land west of Frome Road

8.1(b) BRUT 2: Land at Brewham Road

8.1(c) BRUT 3: Land east of Cole Road

8.1(d) Another Option (please specify)

Employment

- 8.11 There has been a net increase of 0.21ha of employment land in the town since 2006/07; and an overall net gain in floorspace of 2,933sq.m, although 3,099sq.m have also been lost. Nearly all the losses were to residential use. The developments

that have been completed in Bruton reflect its strong High Street, its cultural focus and role as a service and retail centre, 'A', 'C' and 'D' use classes being prevalent.

Figure 8.4: Bruton Economic Development as at 31 March 2017

	Land (Hectares) (Net)	Floorspace (Square Metres) (Net)
Complete	0.21	2,933
Under Construction	0.20	110
Not Yet Started	0.54	1,557
Total	0.95	4,600
Local Plan Requirement	3.06	
Residual Requirement	2.11	

Source: SSDC Monitoring Database

8.12 Some key developments in Bruton have been:

- new buildings at Kings School and Sexey's School;
- development at Durslade Farm;
- change of use of the piggery units for light industrial purposes; and
- an additional hotel, café/restaurant space for 'At the Chapel' restaurant.¹²¹

8.13 Policy SS3 of the Local Plan is supporting 3.06ha of additional employment land and this could help improve the town's degree of self-containment. The outstanding requirement of 2.11ha is expected to be delivered through the Development Management process.

Question 8.2

Do you think taking a pro-active approach to planning applications for employment development in Bruton is enough, or should the Council direct growth in employment land through an allocation? If you would like to see an allocated employment site, where should that be?

Retailing

8.14 Bruton is designated a Local Centre in the Local Plan. There is currently a vacancy rate of 12.1% in the town centre, which is slightly above the UK average (11.2%). Nearly half of the existing units are in use as either convenience or comparison retail use, which is higher than the national average, together with a higher proportion of pubs and bars.

Infrastructure

8.15 There has been extensive property flooding in the past, as well as on the A359, related to the River Brue and surface water flooding. However, Bruton Dam now provides a 1 in a 100 year standard of protection to properties in the settlement, and

¹²¹ Economic Development Monitoring Report 2017

the Combe Brook bypass culvert also reduces flood risk to a number of properties in the West End area. Funding is already committed to improve surface water drainage at Cuckoo Hill, and the Environment Agency was planning to undertake reservoir improvements by April 2016. The EA suggests further studies to assess the Bruton flood alleviation scheme and to develop a surface water management scheme, as well as the preparation of a flood emergency plan for the settlement. Flood defences at Bruton may need to be raised in the future to provide an increased standard of protection, funded through development.

- 8.16 The existing Doctor's Surgery is understood to require improvement, but a new surgery building has now been granted planning permission on a site on Frome Road. NHS England and Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) recognise the requirement for improved GP facilities and have committed funding for a business case and feasibility study to be commissioned.
- 8.17 The District Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan does not identify any high priority requirements for Bruton, although it is recognised that, ideally, improvements to open space and sports facilities may be necessary at some point in the future.

Question 8.3

In addition to the infrastructure described above, are there any other infrastructure requirements for Bruton?

Rural Centres - Ilchester

Spatial Portrait

- 8.18 Ilchester is situated five miles north of Yeovil, where the River Yeo crosses the Fosse Way. The settlement has a population of 2,153¹²², which has increased in recent years by housing service personnel and their families stationed at the nearby Royal Naval Air Station (RNAS) at Yeovilton.
- 8.19 Flooding, archaeology, and noise exposure from RNAS flying activities constrain and direct the growth of the settlement. Consequently, recent growth to the settlement has been in a separate cluster of development to the north, linked to the historic centre by the Fosse Way.
- 8.20 There has been some political pressure to reassess the noise exposure contours that indicate the expected noise levels from flying activities in each area. However, RNAS Yeovilton, their noise specialists, and the Council's Environmental Health officers, all hold the view that the contours are unlikely to have materially changed since the last review was undertaken. The current noise exposure information has therefore been used to consider Ilchester's growth options and Policy EQ7 (Pollution Control).

¹²² NOMIS Built-up Area data, <http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk/bua-maps.html?fontsize=large>

Housing

- 8.21 Local Plan Policy SS5 (Delivering New Housing Growth) states that Ilchester should deliver 141 new dwellings. Monitoring data shows that Ilchester has delivered no net gain, yet the number of commitments suggests that it may meet and even exceed the target at some point in the future.

Figure 8.5: Housing Delivery (Net)

Housing Commitments	Dwellings
Net Completions (01/04/06 to 31/03/17)	0
Existing Commitments (as at 31/03/17)	161
Total	161

Source: SSDC Monitoring Database

- 8.22 Of the 161 commitments, 150 relate to a site to the north of the town on which outline planning permission has been granted¹²³. The ability of the settlement to meet the requirement is therefore tied to this permission, for which no reserved matters application has been submitted.
- 8.23 The HELAA identified no potential housing sites. One mixed use site 'Costello Fields' was considered unsuitable but, since then, this Authority has been made aware that the adjoining land to south-west is also available which may allow a scheme better related to the settlement.

Employment

- 8.24 Policy SS3 (Delivering New Employment Land) states that 1.02ha of employment land should be delivered at Ilchester.
- 8.25 Ilchester's attraction to businesses is arguably its ease of access onto the A303, A37, and A372, together with its close proximity to Yeovilton.
- 8.26 The main areas of employment would be the town centre, Ilchester Community Primary School, and the Norse Ltd site.
- 8.27 Ilchester has the highest employment floorspace under construction in the District but has a net loss of 0.02ha of employment land.

¹²³ 15/00024/OUT, approved on 11 December 2015

Figure 8.6: Ilchester Economic Development as at 31 March 2017

	Land (Hectares) (Net)	Floorspace (Square Metres) (Net)
Complete	-0.02	1,160
Under Construction	0.43	1,140
Not Yet Started	0.0	101
Total	0.41	2,401
Local Plan Requirement	1.02	
Residual Requirement	0.61	

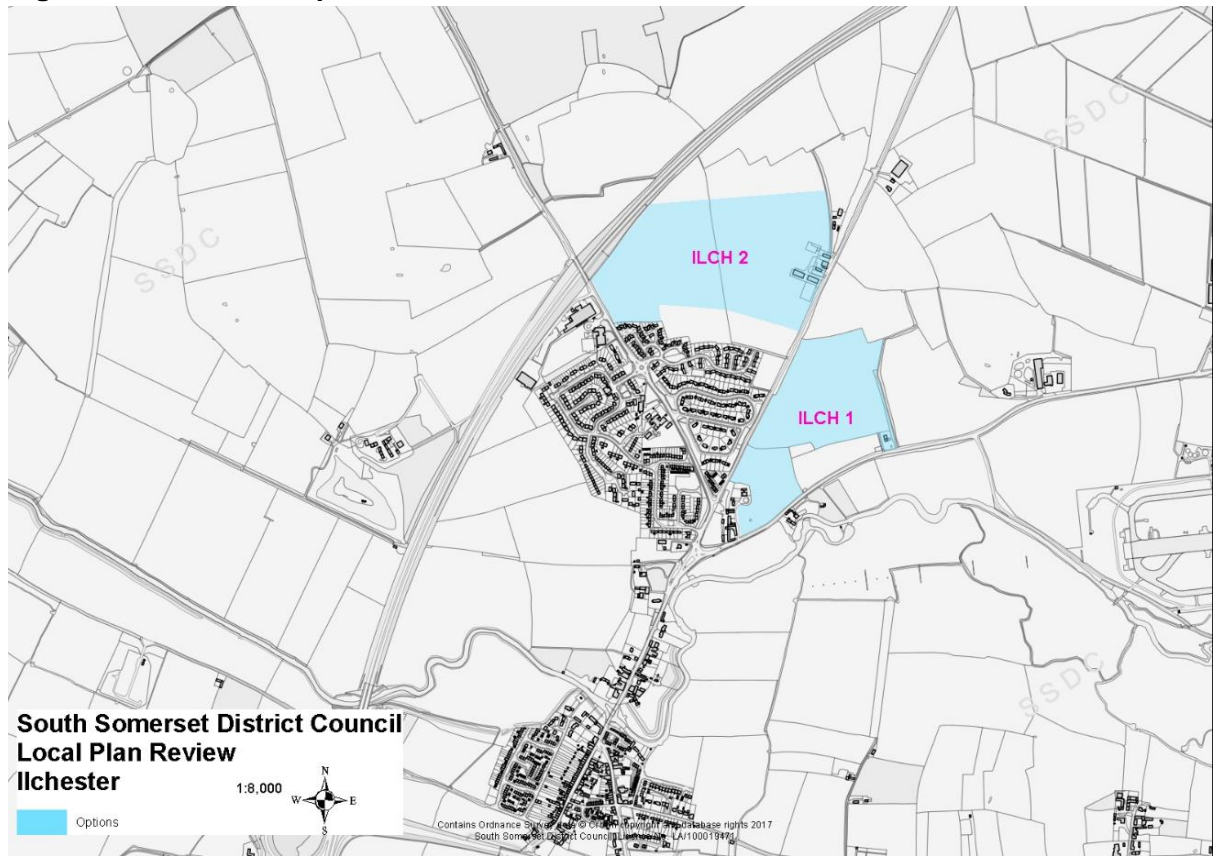
Source: SSDC Monitoring Database

8.28 The following options for Ilchester's growth of are being put forward for consultation.

Figure 8.7: Options for Housing and Employment Growth at Ilchester:

Option	Location	Comments / Constraints
ILCH 1	Costello Fields	<p>The site is in the north-east of Ilchester, to the east of the Fosse Way, and includes HELAA site E/ILCH/0001/10.</p> <p>It has a moderate-high to moderate capacity to accommodate built form, and in a mixed use scenario has an estimated capacity to accommodate around 130 dwellings and 7.15ha of economic development land.</p> <p>A small corner of the option site, where the site meets the track/ access to Hainbury Cottage, is in Flood Zone 3. Its proximity to Yeovilton is considered advantageous for economic development.</p>
ILCH 2	Land North of Troubridge Park	<p>The site has moderate-high to moderate capacity to accommodate built form. For solely housing, the site has capacity for around 290 dwellings. In a mixed use scenario, the site has capacity to accommodate around 145 dwellings and 9.6ha of economic development land.</p> <p>The site was not identified through the HELAA process.</p>

Figure 8.8: Ilchester Options



Question 8.4

Which of the following options should be taken forward through the LPR?

Options 8.4

Options for growth at Ilchester include:

- 8.4(a)** ILCH 1: Costello Fields for mixed use development
- 8.4(b)** ILCH 2: Land North of Troubridge Park for mixed use development
- 8.4(c)** ILCH 2: Land North of Troubridge Park for housing
- 8.4(d)** Another option (please specify)

Retailing

- 8.29 The Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study highlights the limited number of commercial units in the centre and Yeovil's significant draw for shoppers in the settlement. At the time of writing, the Post Office is the sole vacant unit in the centre. Surplus expenditure should be channelled into the reoccupation of the vacant unit.

Infrastructure

- 8.30 Fluvial flooding from the River Yeo is a key risk at Ilchester, with surface water flooding also being an issue at Ilchester Meads. There has been flooding on the highway on the A37 and nearby on the A303. Flood risk infrastructure includes embankments and raised channel banks on the River Yeo and flood walls. The embankment that runs alongside the River Yeo may need to be increased in height to help protect the settlement in the future.
- 8.31 New housing will generate a need for additional open space and outdoor play space, sports, community and cultural facilities; although the timing of this is not fundamental to delivering development.
- 8.32 The GP surgery has no capacity for additional patients. It is currently operating out of less space than advocated in business case guidance, and there is little or no capacity to expand the current site. Given these factors, a new site and premises are required to accommodate Ilchester's housing growth. Equipped play areas have also been identified a particular priority.

Question 8.5

Which of the following options should be taken forward through the LPR?

Options 8.5

Options for the siting of a new GP surgery include:

8.5(a) ILCH 1: Costello Fields

8.5(b) ILCH 2: Land North of Troubridge Park

8.5(c) Another site in Ilchester

Question 8.6

In addition to the infrastructure described above, are there any other infrastructure requirements for Ilchester?

Rural Centres - Martock and Bower Hinton

Spatial Portrait

- 8.33 Martock and Bower Hinton are situated in central South Somerset, on the southern edge of the Somerset Levels and Moors and just off the A303. Mill Brook and Hurst Brook flow between Martock and Bower Hinton to the south, before joining the River Parrett to the west. The town is surrounded by gently undulating hills that are

regarded as having high landscape value. It is well connected to Yeovil, which is situated seven miles to the southeast.

- 8.34 The population of Martock parish is approximately 4,378¹²⁴. The town has a good variety of services, although self-containment is an issue. The travel to work data shows that over 50% of the population out-commute, mainly to Yeovil, Taunton Deane, Crewkerne, and Ilchester and surrounds, even though the town is home to a number of small businesses.
- 8.35 The Parish of Martock was designated a Neighbourhood Area for the purposes of a Neighbourhood Plan in April 2016 and a Resident Survey has recently been completed.

Housing

- 8.36 Local Plan Policy SS5 (Delivering New Housing Growth) states that Martock and Bower Hinton should deliver 230 new dwellings over the Plan period. Figure 8.9 shows that, to date, there have been 220 completions or commitments, leaving only 10 dwellings as an outstanding requirement. An appeal has recently been allowed and planning permission granted for residential development for up to additional 24 dwellings at Triways, Foldhill Lane.

Figure 8.9: Housing Delivery (Net)

Housing Commitments	Dwellings
Net Completions (01/04/06 to 31/03/17)	93
Existing Commitments (as at 31/03/17)	127
Total	220

Source: SSDC Monitoring Database

- 8.37 Based on the current evidence the following options for additional growth at Martock and Bower Hinton have been identified.

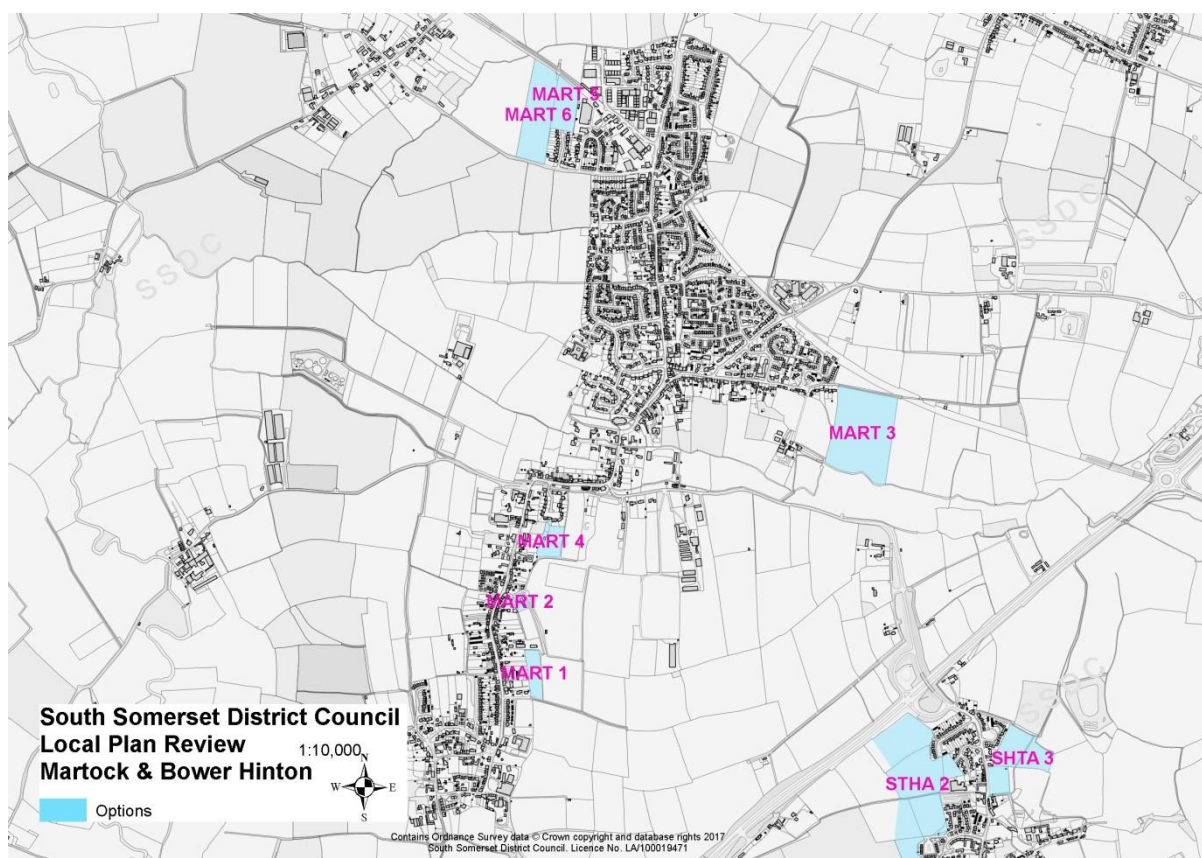
Figure 8.10: Options for Housing Growth at Martock and Bower Hinton

Option	Location	Comments / Constraints
MART 1	Dimmocks Lane, Bower Hinton	The site is on the eastern edge of Bower Hinton and has only a low-moderate capacity to accommodate development. It could be expected to provide 20 dwellings, but concerns have previously been expressed over the potential impact on the setting of the Conservation Area.
MART 2	Land Rear of The Rose & Crown	A site on the eastern side of Bower Hinton with potential for about five dwellings as part of a mix-use development. The site has high archaeological potential.

¹²⁴ Census 2011 Martock BUA

MART 3	Land South of East Street Drove	A site on the eastern edge of Martock, with limited access via a narrow lane. It has the potential to provide 10 dwellings, although the proximity of the Conservation Area and a nearby group of Listed Buildings place a constraint on this. The option is located within BMV agricultural land.
MART 4	Land Off Water Street	<p>A site on the eastern side of Bower Hinton adjacent to the site the subject of application no. 12/04897/OUT, which is under construction. The site has potential for up to 10 dwellings, although the proximity of the Conservation Area places a constraint on this. The site has high archaeological potential.</p> <p>Planning application 16/04699/OUT for the erection of 12 dwellings on the site has recently been refused.</p>
MART 5	Land to the North of Lyndhurst Grove	A site on the north-western edge of Martock, identified as having high capacity to accommodate built development and up to 30 dwellings. However, an application ref 13/01500/OUT for 35 dwellings has recently been refused. The option is located within BMV agricultural land.
MART 6	Land to the North of Coat Road	A site immediately to the west of MART5 and is identified as having moderate capacity to accommodate built development and up to 55 dwellings. The site has high archaeological potential. The option is located within BMV agricultural land.

Figure 8.11: Martock and Bower Hinton Options



Question 8.7

Which of the following options should be taken forward through the LPR?

Options 8.7

Options for housing growth at Martock and Bower Hinton include:

- 8.7(a)** MART 1: Dimmocks Lane, Bower Hinton
- 8.7(b)** MART 2: Land Rear of The Rose & Crown
- 8.7(c)** MART 3: Land South of East Street Drive
- 8.7(d)** MART 4: Land Off Water Street
- 8.7(e)** MART 5: Land to the rear of Lyndhurst Grove
- 8.7(f)** MART 6: Land to the North of Coat Road
- 8.7(g)** Another option (please specify)

Employment

- 8.38 There has been no net increase of employment land in the town since 2006/07 and a net reduction of floorspace of 278m². There are expected to be further net losses through unimplemented planning permissions (see Figure 8.12).

Figure 8.12: Martock and Bower Hinton Economic Development as at 31 March 2017

	Land (Hectares) (Net)	Floorspace (Square Metres) (Net)
Complete	0.0	-278
Under Construction	-0.10	-132
Not Yet Started	2.8	4,990
Total	2.7	4,580
Local Plan Requirement	3.19	
Residual Requirement	0.49	

Source: SSDC Monitoring Database

- 8.39 Policy SS3 of the Local Plan is supporting 3.19ha of additional employment land and this could help improve the town's degree of self-containment. The current Local Plan allocates a site of 1.8ha for employment purposes on land to the West of Ringwell Hill (ME/MART/2). A planning application¹²⁵ for the residential development of this site was refused permission and a subsequent appeal was dismissed, the Inspector considering that the site was not suitable for residential use. Concerns have now been expressed over the potential for a mixed use development that could have supported a part commercial use of the site; and doubt that this is viable for employment use alone. Given that this site was originally allocated in the 1991 Local Plan and it has still not come forward, the issues and options consultation presents an opportunity to consider whether it is appropriate to continue with this allocation.

Question 8.8

Do you think that it is appropriate that the currently allocated site ME/MART/2 continues to be designated for employment use?

- 8.40 The outstanding requirement of 0.49 ha is expected to be delivered through the Development Management process.

Retailing

- 8.41 Martock and Bower Hinton are designated a Local Centre in the Local Plan. There are a very limited range of comparison units and their proportion of the town centre is about half of the UK average. There is, however, a relatively good convenience offer, with two small supermarkets, a newsagent and a bakery. There is also a vacancy

¹²⁵ Application Ref 14/04723/OUT and Appeal APP/R53325/W/16/3143789

rate (10.5%) which is slightly below the UK average (11.2%). The projected retail floorspace requirements to 2034 are set out in Figure 8.13 below.

Figure 8.13: Future retail requirements in Martock to 2034 (sq. m. gross)

Type	By 2024	By 2029	By 2034 (Total requirement over Plan Period)
Convenience	262	278	294
Comparison	63	150	238
Food and Beverage	11	33	54

Source: South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study, 2017

- 8.42 Proposals for retail floorspace above 250sq. m will require a retail impact assessment.

Infrastructure

- 8.43 There are flooding issues in Martock, where the River Parrett travels through the settlement. There are localised problems, exacerbated by small culverted watercourses which are prone to blockage or are undersized – the culverted watercourses that run through the settlement are described by Somerset County Council as being at capacity. There have been property flooding incidents at Foldhill Lane and Long Load Road, and flooding on the highway at various locations but particularly at Stoke Road. The flood alleviation scheme at Martock includes a 300m flood embankment, throttle structures, widened channel, and walls. If development is proposed on the eastern edge of Martock then existing culverts should be upgraded, funded through developer contributions. Flood defences may need to be raised in the future, depending on the location and floor levels of future development. A minor scheme to improve the inlet to the Foldhill Lane culvert has been carried out by SCC.
- 8.44 Short term issues associated with a lack of electricity capacity have been identified in Martock, but they are resolvable through local enhancements paid for by developers.
- 8.45 New housing will generate a need for additional open space and outdoor play space, sports, community and cultural facilities; although the timing of this is not fundamental to delivering development. An equipped play area at Martock is a particular priority. Delivery of this infrastructure will also be dependent on securing contributions from development (where viable), along with obtaining other funding streams.

Question 8.9

In addition to the infrastructure described above, are there any other infrastructure requirements for Martock & Bower Hinton?

Rural Centres - Milborne Port

Spatial Portrait

- 8.46 Milborne Port is located in the east of the District near to the Dorset border and on the edge of the Blackmore Vale. The River Gascoigne flows south through the village. An area of flood risk runs through the centre of settlement from north to south.
- 8.47 The A30 runs west to east through the centre of Milborne Port, providing a direct road connection to Sherborne in Dorset and Yeovil in South Somerset. Railway stations with routes to London and Exeter are located at Sherborne and Yeovil.
- 8.48 Milborne Port is noted for its historic environment and has two Conservation Areas, one at New Town and the other encompassing the centre of the settlement. Much of the landscape around Milborne Port is considered to be of high value, and includes the Ven House Historic Park and Garden to the south east.
- 8.49 The settlement has a resident population of 2,802 people¹²⁶. For some time, self-containment has been identified as an issue for Milborne Port due to the lack of employment opportunities¹²⁷.
- 8.50 The Milborne Port Community Plan is being updated and the Parish Plan group have recently carried out a survey and are in the process of analysing the responses.

Housing

- 8.51 Local Plan Policy SS5 (Delivering New Housing Growth) states that Milborne Port should deliver 279 new dwellings over the plan period. Monitoring shows that housing is being delivered and once commitments are taken in to account the requirement has almost been met.

Figure 8.14: Housing Delivery (Net)

Housing Commitments	Dwellings
Net Completions (01/04/06 to 31/03/17)	227
Existing Commitments (as at 31/03/17)	29
Total	256

Source: SSDC Monitoring Database

- 8.52 The Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment, 2017¹²⁸, identifies that over the next 10 years there is land with the potential to provide about 277 dwellings on suitable, available and achievable housing or mixed use sites. These sites are located to the north, south, east and west of the settlement.

¹²⁶ Census 2011, BUA

¹²⁷ South Somerset Settlement Role and Function Study, Final Report, April 2009

¹²⁸ South Somerset Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment, 2017

<https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/early-review-of-local-plan-2006-2028/project-management-monitoring/south-somerset-housing-and-employment-land-availability-assessment/>

- 8.53 Based on the current evidence the following options for additional housing growth at Milborne Port have been identified.

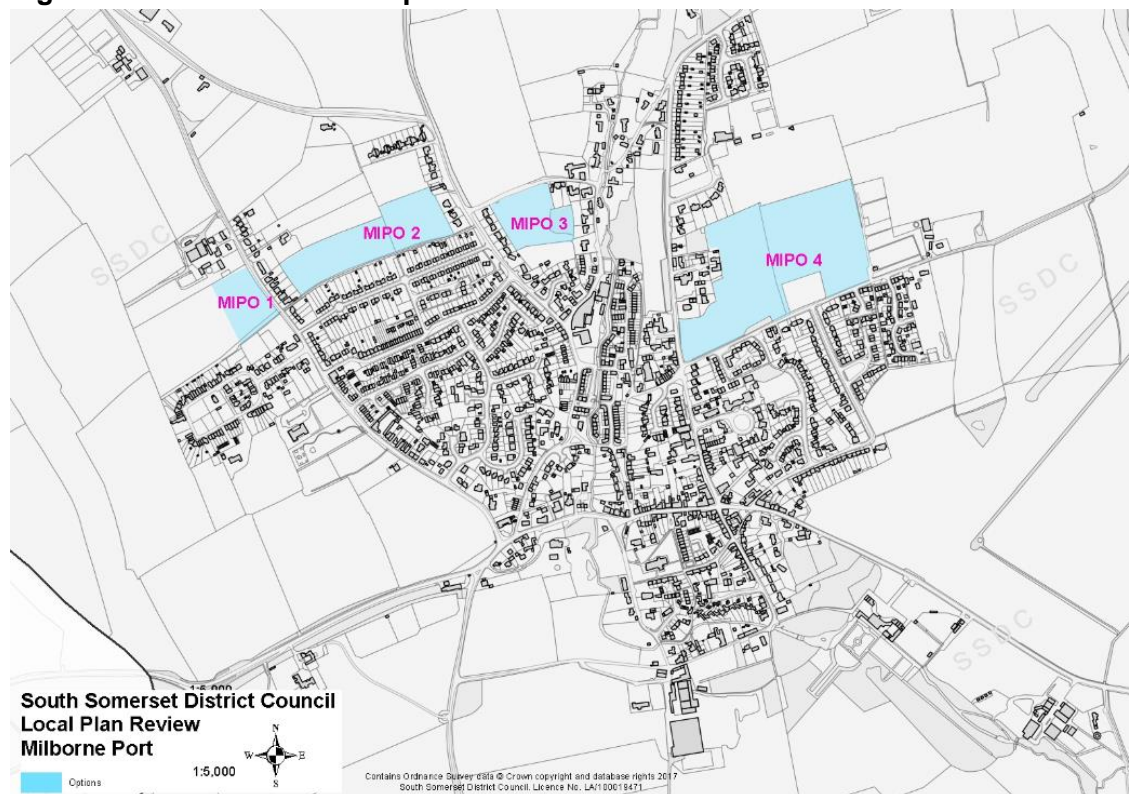
Figure 8.15: Options for housing growth at Milborne Port

Option	Location	Comments / Constraints
MIPO 1	Land at Wynbrook Farm	<p>This option forms the eastern part of HELAA site E/MIPO/0017. The option site has been reduced in size to minimise impact on the New Town Conservation Area.</p> <p>The 'Peripheral Landscape Study – Milborne Port'¹²⁹ identifies that this site has a moderate capacity to accommodate built development.</p> <p>The site is BMV agricultural land and in a Mineral Safeguarding area.</p> <p>The site has the potential to accommodate around 30 dwellings.</p>
MIPO 2	Land north of Manor Road	<p>The Peripheral Landscape Study identifies the land as having a moderate capacity to accommodate built development.</p> <p>The site is BMV agricultural land and in a Mineral Safeguarding area.</p> <p>The site is currently landlocked but could be achieved via South Somerset District Council or other third party land.</p> <p>The site has the potential to accommodate around 45 dwellings.</p> <p>The site was not identified through the HELAA process.</p>
MIPO 3	South of Court Lane	<p>This option comprises HELAA site E/MIPO/0015.</p> <p>From a landscape perspective the site is identified as having a high capacity to accommodate built development.</p> <p>Satisfactory access may prove difficult to achieve.</p> <p>The site has the potential to accommodate around 30 dwellings.</p>

¹²⁹ Peripheral Landscape Study – Milborne Port, October 2008
https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/321284/peripheral%20landscape%20study_milborne%20port.pdf

MIPO 4	Land north of Wheathill Lane	<p>The land is identified as having a high and moderate capacity to accommodate built development.</p> <p>The site is BMV agricultural land and partially in a Mineral Safeguarding area.</p> <p>The site has the potential to accommodate around 110 dwellings.</p> <p>The site was not identified through the HELAA process.</p>
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Figure 8.16: Milborne Port Options



Question 8.10

Which of the following options should be taken forward in the LPR?

Option 8.10

Options for housing growth at Milborne Port include:

8.10(a) MIPO 1: Land at Wynbrook Farm

8.10(b) MIPO 2: Land north of Manor Road

8.10(c) MIPO 3: South of Court Lane

8.10(d) MIPO 4: Land north of Wheathill Lane

8.10(e) Another option (please specify)

Employment

- 8.54 Local Plan Policy SS3 (Delivering New Employment Land) identifies a requirement for 0.84 hectares (ha) of employment land in Milborne Port over the Plan period.
- 8.55 Little employment development has occurred in Milborne Port; the town has delivered net losses of employment land and floorspace due to the change of the Tannery site, Clark House and Wheathill Nurseries to residential uses.

Figure 8.17: Milborne Port Economic Development as at 31 March 2016

	Land (Hectares) (Net)	Floorspace (Square Metres) (Net)
Complete	-3.79	-7,709
Under Construction	0.0	0
Not Yet Started	0.0	-254
Total	-3.79	-7,709
Local Plan Requirement	0.84	
Residual Requirement	0.84	

Source: SSDC Monitoring Database

Retailing

- 8.56 Milborne Port is a designated Local Centre in the retail hierarchy (Policy EP9) it has a small but vital number of commercial units as well as a library. There is one vacant unit which is the Queens Head Public House. The town centre lacks a bank and convenience store, although there is a Co-op store located at Coldharbour, north of the centre.

- 8.57 Milborne Port's town centre is very small, with just six commercial units interspersed with domestic properties and the library. The buildings in the town centre are largely traditional in appearance with a number listed. The town centre is located within one of the settlement's two Conservation Areas.
- 8.58 There is a small car park in the centre providing 10 spaces. The main A30 runs through the centre, adversely affecting pedestrian movement.

Infrastructure

- 8.59 The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)¹³⁰ shows that the development proposed for Milborne Port in the Local Plan is unlikely to result in abnormal or fundamental infrastructure constraints. Subject to growth and water quality objectives, Wessex Water may carry out a treatment works scheme at Milborne Port.

Question 8.11

In addition to the infrastructure described above, are there any other infrastructure requirements for Milborne Port?

Rural Centres - South Petherton

Spatial Portrait

- 8.60 South Petherton is a large Hamstone village with a resident population of 3,064¹³¹.
- 8.61 The settlement is located in a shallow sided valley immediately to the north of the A303, approximately 5 miles to the north of Crewkerne, 5 miles to the east of Ilminster, and 6 miles north-west of Yeovil.
- 8.62 The Parish Council is in the process of creating a Neighbourhood Plan. It has recently been submitted to the District Council (Regulation 16). The Plan has the following aims:
- Protect and enhance our countryside and natural environment
 - Focus future development on small, incremental expansion of the village
 - Control future development
 - Retain the distinctive character of the village
 - Set appropriate design and space standards for new development
 - Establish a more accessible (pedestrian-and cyclist friendly) environment
 - Ensure new housing meets local needs and increases choice
 - Strengthen retail/commercial function of village centre
 - Support the growth of local business / enterprise
 - Reduce substantially the impact of the motor vehicle

¹³⁰ South Somerset Infrastructure Delivery Plan Update 2015/16 Part One – Spatial Summary
https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/814403/idp_2015_16_part_1_issue.pdf

¹³¹ NOMIS Built-up Area data, <http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk/bua-maps.html?fontsize=large>

- Improve parking provision
- Provide for a wide range of community facilities and services and improve leisure and recreation opportunities
- Increase sport and recreation facilities and opportunities at the Rec.

8.63 The Neighbourhood Plan seeks for housing development to be of a scale commensurate with delivery levels of 12 dwellings per year.

Housing

8.64 Local Plan Policy SS5 (Delivering New Housing Growth) states that 229 new dwellings should be delivered in South Petherton. The Policy outlines a "permissive approach" prior to the adoption of the Site Allocations Development Plan Document when considering housing proposals adjacent to the development area.

8.65 Monitoring shows that South Petherton has delivered 232 new dwellings. The housing requirement for the settlement has therefore been marginally surpassed, with potential for the settlement to achieve further growth subject to the delivery of commitments.

Figure 8.18: Housing Delivery (Net)

Housing Commitments	Dwellings
Net Completions (01/04/06 to 31/03/17)	232
Existing Commitments (as at 31/03/17)	28
Total	260

Source: SSDC Monitoring Database

8.66 South Petherton has a strong housing market which has facilitated the delivery of new dwellings. The HELAA¹³² identified four potential housing sites. The strength of the market and the potential housing sites identified in the HELAA suggest that the settlement could continue to be an important settlement for the delivery of housing in the future.

¹³²<https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/early-review-of-local-plan-2006-2028/evidence-base/south-somerset-housing-and-employment-land-availability-assessment/>

Figure 8.19: Options for Housing Growth at South Petherton

Option	Location	Comments / Constraints
SOPE 1	Land south of Hospital Lane	<p>A planning application¹³³ was submitted on this site for residential development. The application was refused by the Area North Committee and no appeal was lodged.</p> <p>The site is recognised as having a high to moderate-high capacity to accommodate built form from a landscape standpoint¹³⁴, and was acknowledged in the HELAA (N/SOPE/0008) as being suitable and available for the accommodation of around 45 homes but since the construction of the doctor's surgery as well as potential access and rights of way issue, this figure is expected to be around 40 dwellings or fewer.</p> <p>The site is BMV agricultural land, located adjacent to the development area on three of its four boundaries.</p> <p>Policy TT2 of the South Petherton Neighbourhood Plan submission document prefers that this site be used for additional off-street public parking.</p>
SOPE 2	Land Rear of Lampreys Lane	<p>The site is situated to the east of Lampreys Lane and Old Vicarage Gardens, and to the south/ south-west of Hele Lane. It is therefore located adjacent to the development area.</p> <p>The site is mostly BMV agricultural land with a small segment in the north-east of the site in a Mineral Consultation Area.</p> <p>From a landscape perspective, the site has a high to moderate-high capacity to accommodate built development. It has capacity to accommodate around 115 dwellings, though this may be reduced by an on-site watercourse.</p> <p>The site was not identified through the HELAA process.</p>
SOPE 3	Land Rear of Littlehays	<p>This site is located with dwellings to its north, south, and west, and a hardstanding/ track delineating its eastern boundary, forming a small pocket of land with capacity for around 10 dwellings.</p> <p>The site includes an existing dwelling, is BMV agricultural land, and is located to the north-east of a Grade II* listed building. It was deemed suitable and available for 11 new dwellings in the HELAA (N/SOPE/0001/10) and would appear to be a sensible in-fill site for built-form.</p>

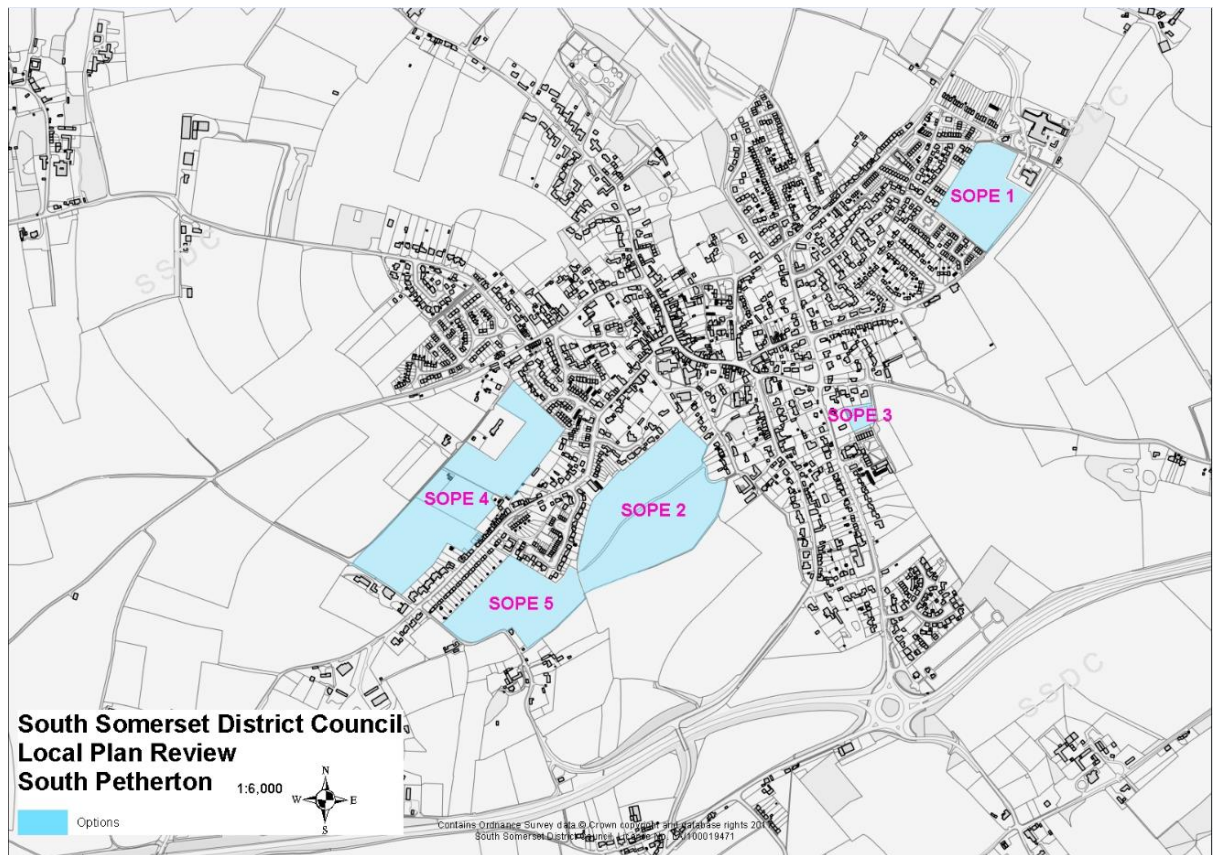
¹³³ 14/04142/FUL

¹³⁴ Peripheral Landscape Study (2008)

SOPE 4	Land Rear of West Street, Partway Lane	<p>This site is located to the south-west of the settlement, with land of a high, high-moderate, and moderate capacity to accommodate built-form, according to the Peripheral Landscape Study.</p> <p>Part of the site was submitted in the HELAA (N/SOPE/0013) and was considered suitable, available, and deliverable for housing. The site as proposed is amended not to include land to the south-west of Partway Lane, but to extend to the north-east towards the centre of South Petherton. As such, the site could accommodate, approximately 110 dwellings, but work will have to be undertaken to assess its availability and deliverability, of the whole site.</p> <p>Also, the site is BMV agricultural land, with rights of way running along the north-west boundary through the site from north-west to south-east.</p>
SOPE 5	Land off Lampreys Lane/ Behind Moor Villas	<p>The site is located between Moor Lane, Lampreys Lane, and to the rear of properties on West Street.</p> <p>The site, which is BMV agricultural land with two rights of way running through it, has capacity to accommodate approximately 60 dwellings.</p> <p>At the time of writing there is an outline planning application¹³⁵ being considered for residential development on part of the site, but it is considered that the whole is suitable for residential development.</p> <p>The site was not identified through the HELAA process.</p>

¹³⁵ 17/02709/OUT: – 89 dwellings (to include 31 affordable homes), vehicular access, public open space, and associated works

Figure 8.20: South Petherton Options



Question 8.12

Which of the following options should be taken forward through the LPR?

Options 8.12

Options for housing growth at South Petherton include:

- 8.12(a)** SOPE 1: Land South of Hospital Lane
- 8.12(b)** SOPE 2: Land Rear of Lampreys Lane
- 8.12(c)** SOPE 3: Land Rear of Littlehays
- 8.12(d)** SOPE 4: Land Rear of West Street, Partway Lane
- 8.12(e)** SOPE 5: Land off Lampreys Lane/ Behind Moor Villas
- 8.12(f)** Another option (please specify)

Employment

- 8.67 Policy SS3 (Delivering New Employment Land) states that 2.47ha of employment land should be delivered in South Petherton up to 2028.
- 8.68 The close proximity of South Petherton to the A303 gives the settlement an advantage for attracting employment growth. Its potential is however tempered by some of its narrow roads that may struggle to accommodate a significant rise in large vehicle (HGV) movements.
- 8.69 In the past, work has been undertaken to find employment land in South Petherton to meet local needs, yet no acceptable alternatives to Lopen Head Nursery were identified. Consequently the Lopen Head Nursery site was allocated (1.81 hectares) as it was deemed a sustainable location to meet the employment needs of surrounding villages, including South Petherton. The Local Plan makes clear that the Policy SS3 requirement to deliver the remaining requirement of 0.66 ha of employment land is to promote an alternative to the Lopen Head Nursery site.
- 8.70 The Economic Development Monitoring Report¹³⁶ found that the majority of floorspace delivered in South Petherton can be explained by the significant development of Lopen Head Nursery for B1, B2 and B8 uses. All of the 0.7ha and 3,558m² of floorspace with permission but not started relates to an extension to the Lopen Head Nursery.
- 8.71 There has been economic development in South Petherton, including the completion of a new hospital, and the redevelopment of the existing facility, a new doctor's surgery and pharmacy, and a wedding venue facility at Drayton Farm.

Figure 8.21: South Petherton Economic Development as at 31 March 2017

	Land (Hectares) (Net)	Floorspace (Square Metres) (Net)
Complete	2.26	6,788
Under Construction	-0.20	-184
Not Yet Started	0.69	3558
Total	2.75	10,162
Local Plan Requirement	2.47	
Residual Requirement	0	

Source: SSDC Monitoring Database

- 8.72 The Draft Neighbourhood Plan seeks employment land provision adjacent to the A303 following its dualling, but it is uncertain when that will be.
- 8.73 South Petherton's current reliance on Lopen Head to meet its employment land requirements could theoretically be addressed by the allocation of land for employment. However, no employment or mixed use sites in South Petherton were submitted as part of the HELAA, and no other suitable sites are apparent.

¹³⁶

https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/882701/south_somerset_economic_development_monitoring_report_issue_for_website_100417.pdf

Question 8.13

Are there any sites in South Petherton that should be allocated for employment land?

Retailing

- 8.74 The Retail and Main Town Centres Uses Study¹³⁷ identifies that the offer of convenience and food and drink uses is good. The centre also has a higher than average provision of comparison units when compared with the national average; however, range is limited. The provision of service uses is below the national average.
- 8.75 The centre is within a Conservation Area, comprising a number of high quality, attractive historic buildings and public realm. The commercial units are historic and in the most part have traditional shopfronts. The vacancy rate is very low, suggesting that the centre is healthy.
- 8.76 The Study does not see the need for any retail site allocations or changes in retail policy for the settlement.

Infrastructure

- 8.77 The IDP indicates that new housing will generate a need for additional open space and outdoor play space, sports, community and cultural facilities; although the timing of this is not fundamental to delivering development.
- 8.78 Improvements to Blake Hall are identified as a priority. There is also localised flooding, exacerbated by small, culverted, watercourses that are often undersized and prone to blockage. There is an EA maintained raised embankment and culvert downstream of Hele Lane ford. Flood defences may need to be raised in the future to provide an increased standard of protection for the settlement.
- 8.79 Short term issues associated with a lack of electricity capacity have been identified and there may be water treatment works necessary. Both matters are resolvable with local enhancements, paid for by developers.

Question 8.14

In addition to the infrastructure described above, are there any other infrastructure requirements for South Petherton?

¹³⁷ South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centres Uses Study

Rural Centres - Stoke sub Hamdon

Spatial Portrait

- 8.80 Stoke sub Hamdon is a Rural Centre located to the west of Yeovil, to the south of the A303.
- 8.81 The steep slopes of Ham Hill form a topographical constraint to the growth of the settlement. It also provides a landmark that contributes to the character of the settlement. Much of the settlement is constructed in local Hamstone and is characterised by tight development fronting directly onto the highway.
- 8.82 The Settlement Role and Function Study¹³⁸ considered Stoke sub Hamdon and East Stoke conjointly as a Rural Centre by reason of their close functional relationship and pooled services. For this reason, East Stoke is considered together with Stoke sub Hamdon for the purposes of the LPR.

Housing

- 8.83 Policy SS5 (Delivering New Housing Growth) states that 51 dwellings should be delivered in Stoke sub Hamdon.
- 8.84 Monitoring shows there are sufficient commitments for housing delivery, but the low number of completions to date may suggest some uncertainty in this regard.

Figure 8.22: Housing Delivery (Net)

Housing Commitments	Dwellings
Net Completions (01/04/06 to 31/03/17)	7
Existing Commitments (as at 31/03/17)	48
Total	55

Source: SSDC Monitoring Database

- 8.85 A number of future options for housing growth have been identified in Stoke sub Hamdon.

¹³⁸ <https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/evidence-base/district-wide-documents/settlement-role-and-function-study/>

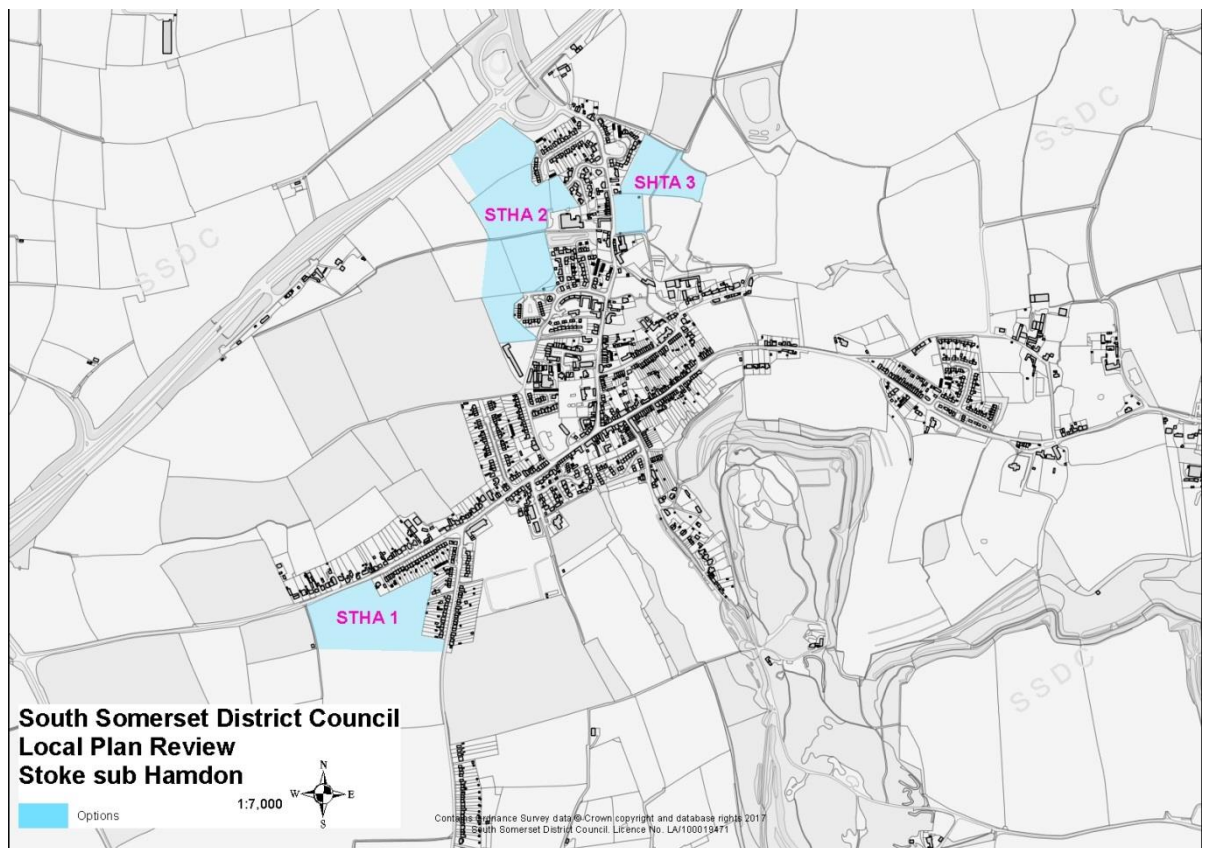
Figure 8.23: Options for Housing Growth at Stoke sub Hamdon

Option	Location	Comments / Constraints
STHA 1	Land at West Street	<p>A centre parcel of the site is subject to an application¹³⁹ for residential development, which at the time of writing has not been determined. It was also identified a potential housing site in the HELAA (N/STHA/0002). Further work to assess the availability of the rest of the site will be required.</p> <p>The Peripheral Landscape Study¹⁴⁰ shows that the centre segment of land has high capacity to accommodate built-form, with some moderate-low capacity in the south, and moderate capacity to the west. The site has capacity to accommodate around 80 dwellings.</p> <p>The site is BMV agricultural land.</p>
STHA 2	Land west of Kings Road	<p>The Peripheral Landscape Study shows that the land is primarily of a moderate-high capacity for built-form, with some moderate capacity, and a small segment of moderate-low capacity. The site has capacity to accommodate around 155 dwellings, though amenity issues from proximity to the A303 may reduce that figure.</p> <p>Two rights of way run through the site.</p> <p>The site is mostly BMV agricultural land, with some of the land within an Area of High Archaeological Potential. An archaeological site lies outside the site, to the north-west.</p> <p>The site was not identified through the HELAA process.</p>
STHA 3	Land east of North Street	<p>The site has moderate-high capacity to accommodate built-form, except a parcel of moderate capacity land within in the Conservation Area.</p> <p>The site is BMV agricultural land in an Area of High Archaeological Potential. The site is shaped by the exclusion of an archaeological site to the south.</p> <p>The site has a capacity to accommodate around 50 dwellings though design to enhance/conserv the historic environment may dictate a reduction to that figure.</p> <p>The site was not identified through the HELAA process.</p>

¹³⁹ Outline application ref. 17/01096/OUT

¹⁴⁰ Peripheral Landscape Study (2008): <https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/evidence-base/district-wide-documents/peripheral-landscape-studies/>

Figure 8.24: Stoke sub Hamdon Options



Question 8.15

Which of the following options should be taken forward through the LPR?

Options 8.15

Options for housing growth at Stoke Sub Hamdon include:

8.15(a) STHA 1: Land at West Street

8.15(b) STHA 2: Land west of Kings Road

8.15(c) STHA 3: Land east of North Street

8.15(d) Another option (please specify)

Employment

- 8.86 Policy SS5 (Delivering New Housing Growth) states that 1.09ha of employment land should be delivered in the settlement. Monitoring¹⁴¹ shows that there has been no gross delivery of employment land and a net loss of 0.01ha.
- 8.87 Employment commitments show a further on-going loss of employment land and floorspace, further diminishing the likelihood of achieving the 1.09ha requirement.

Figure 8.25: Stoke sub Hamdon Economic Development as at 31 March 2017

	Land (Hectares) (Net)	Floorspace (Square Metres) (Net)
Complete	-0.01	222
Under Construction	0.0	0
Not Yet Started	-0.49	-782
Total	-0.49	-560
Local Plan Requirement	1.09	
Residual Requirement	1.09	

Source: SSDC Monitoring Database

- 8.88 The HELAA identified no potential employment sites, and no other suitable sites are apparent. Accordingly, no options for employment growth have been put forward.

Retailing

- 8.89 The town centre has a variety of local services. At the time of writing, it has a small supermarket, charity shops, a carpet shop, hairdresser, beauty parlour, and two public houses. The Town Centre Retail Study identifies that the centre lacks any banks or restaurants, and that shoppers are drawn away from the settlement due to the proximity of the larger centres of Yeovil and Ilminster, six and eight miles away respectively.
- 8.90 The Town Centre Retail Study shows no need for any retail site allocations or changes in retail policy for the settlement.

Infrastructure

- 8.91 The IDP prioritised the provision of an equipped play space and improvements to electricity capacity in the area. Both issues are resolvable through investment and their timing is not fundamental to the delivery of new development.
- 8.92 There are no issues identified with Stoke sub Hamdon's infrastructure.

Question 8.16

In addition to the infrastructure described above, are there any other infrastructure requirements for Stoke sub Hamdon?

¹⁴¹ SSDC Monitoring Database

9. Economic Prosperity

Current Approach

- 9.1 The NPPF states that the economic role of the planning system in achieving sustainable growth is to ensure that there is sufficient available land of the right type in the right place, at the right time to support growth and innovation, ensuring the vitality, viability and health of town centres and enabling a strong rural economy.
- 9.2 The current review of Issues and Options is informed by the Economic Development Monitoring Report (April 2017) and the South Somerset Employment Land Evidence Reports¹⁴² (April/ May 2017).
- 9.3 The current Local Plan Settlement Strategy sets out how the Council is pursuing an employment led approach to managing growth across the District - raising levels of self-containment by seeking to deliver balanced employment and housing growth.
- 9.4 There is currently a requirement in Policy SS3 (Delivering Employment Growth) to provide for at least 11,250 new jobs and 149.51 hectares of employment land within the District to 2028 (of which 52.97 hectares will be additional provision to existing employment land supply). Supply consists of saved allocations, land with planning permission, land previously with permission, now lapsed and land under construction.

Strategic Employment Sites

- 9.5 Currently, Local Plan Policy EP1 (Strategic Employment Sites), allocates the following sites as Strategic Employment Sites as they are deemed strategically significant for local and inward investment:
- Crewkerne Key Site (CLR) (KS/CREW/1)
 - Land West of Horlicks, Ilminster (ME/ILMI/3)
 - Land off Station Road, Ilminster (ME/ILMI/4)
 - Land adjacent to Powrmatic, Ilminster (ME/ILMI/5)
- 9.6 As outlined in the settlement sections, the viability of these sites because of the high associated infrastructure costs has impacted on their delivery. Changes in the market have also made these large sites undesirable in recent years. There has been demand for smaller scale industrial units, mostly by start-ups and existing companies growing; there does not currently seem to be an appetite for large floor-plate buildings. There has also been very little demand for new office development in South Somerset since 2006¹⁴³, although there have been exceptions such as the Yeovil Innovation Centre and Motivo; even if these are not located within Yeovil town centre.

¹⁴² South Somerset Employment Land Evidence: Long Term Economic Forecasting and Implications for Employment Sites and Premises (May 2017)

¹⁴³ South Somerset Employment Land Evidence: Review of FEMAs and Understanding Market Trends (April 2017)

9.7 In addition to these strategic sites, there is a portfolio of other employment allocations throughout the District, reserved by saved policies from the 1991-2011 Local Plan. Sections earlier in this document on Crewkerne, Ilminster and Martock have raised issues about whether it is desirable to retain the current employment allocations, but given the evidence above, the same issues relate to most of the allocated sites, which are at:

- Wincanton, New Barns Farm (KS/WINC/1)
- Wincanton, Land between Lawrence Hill and A303 (ME/WINC/3)
- Castle Cary, Torbay Road (ME/CACA/3(i))
- Yeovil Lufton (KS/BRYM/1)
- Yeovil, South of Airfield (ME/YEOV/4)
- Yeovil, Bunford Lane (ME/WEEO/1); and
- Crewkerne, North of Fire Station at Blacknell Lane (ME/CREW/4)

Question 9.1

Which of the following current allocations for employment development should be taken forward in the Local Plan Review?

Option 9.1

Option 9.1(a) Crewkerne Key Site (CLR) (KS/CREW/1)

Option 9.1(b) Land West of Horlicks, Ilminster (ME/ILMI/3)

Option 9.1(c) Land off Station Road, Ilminster (ME/ILMI/4)

Option 9.1(d) Land adjacent to Powrmatic, Ilminster (ME/ILMI/5)

Option 9.1(e) Wincanton, New Barns Farm (KS/WINC/1)

Option 9.1(f) Wincanton, Land between Lawrence Hill and A303 (ME/WINC/3)

Option 9.1(g) Castle Cary, Torbay Road (ME/CACA/3(i))

Option 9.1(h) Yeovil Lufton (KS/BRYM/1)

Option 9.1(i) Yeovil, South of Airfield (ME/YEOV/4)

Option 9.1(j) Yeovil, Bunford Lane (ME/WEEO/1);

Option 9.1(k) Crewkerne, North of Fire Station at Blacknell Lane (ME/CREW/4)

9.8 The 'Directions of Growth' in the existing Local Plan do not differentiate between housing development and employment opportunities. This may have raised the expectations of landowners in respect of achieving residential land value and could

have made it less likely that the sites would be brought forward for employment activities with lower land values. The removal of the Directions of Growth should help to avoid this situation in the future.

- 9.9 The Local Plan employment strategy is not currently working. Development is not occurring where the Council wishes to see it, and the lack of employment land coming forward might be adversely affecting businesses. The potential dualling of the A303 and improvements to the A358 offer opportunities to consider whether it would be appropriate to allocate land for employment activities on this important transport corridor. Furthermore, it might be necessary to encourage further employment at settlements which have been successfully attracting residential developers to build new homes or expand existing employment locations in the “Rest of the District”.
- 9.10 The issue therefore arises as to whether there are other sites not already identified in the HELAA or elsewhere in this document that would be suitable for allocation for employment purposes.

Question 9.2

Are there any sites that are not currently identified in the HELAA or as Options elsewhere in this document, that would be suitable to allocate for employment development; and if so how much and where?

Office Development

- 9.11 Policies EP2 (Office Development) and EP11 (Location of Main Town Centre Uses – The Sequential Approach) both relate to the sequential approach, which requires that applications for town centre uses that are not in an existing town centre and not in accordance with an up to date development plan should be refused planning permission where the applicant has not demonstrated compliance with the sequential approach to site selection, as set out the NPPF.
- 9.12 No alterations are proposed to Policy EP11 as this accurately reflects the requirements of the NPPF, but Policy EP2 merely replicates this requirement specifically for offices, so it is proposed that this latter Policy is deleted.

Question 9.3

Do you agree that Policy EP2, which replicates the requirements of Policy EP11, which applies to all town centre uses, should be deleted?

Safeguarding Employment Land

- 9.13 Policy EP3 of the existing Local plan seeks to ensure that land in use for employment purposes is safeguarded and states that alternative uses would not be granted planning permission unless the local supply of employment land or premises would not be harmed.
- 9.14 As stated in previously, many existing businesses in Use Classes B1, B2 and B8 rely on existing employment sites in order to allow them to grow and yet significant areas of land and buildings are still being lost to other uses, either through the grant of planning permission for alternative uses, or through the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order. It therefore remains important to limit the loss of these sites where possible, particularly where new employment development appears to be difficult to encourage. Proposals to amend the policy in any substantive way are not therefore proposed.
- 9.15 'Employment Premises' are currently defined in the Policy as those in use for Class B1, B2 or B8 purposes. As discussed elsewhere in this document, the extent of employment uses is actually much wider than this, encompassing, for example, retail and leisure premises, so it is probably necessary to make it clearer that this approach applies only to Classes B1, B2 and B8. Minor changes to the text will therefore be made to this effect.

Delivering Employment in the Countryside

- 9.16 The Government's Policy ¹⁴⁴ is to create conditions for strong employment growth in rural areas, making it easier for people to work close to where they live. The NPPF also states that Local Plans should support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through the conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new ones. Policies EP4 (Business Expansion) & EP5 (Farm Diversification) help to meet these aims and no issues arise in respect of the policies. However, the Council does not presently have a policy that considers the impact of proposals for new employment activities in rural areas.
- 9.17 The Council recognises the importance of supporting opportunities to provide rural employment opportunities outside settlement limits as a means of ensuring a diverse and healthy rural economy. There is a range of employment activities, particularly those associated with tourism, recreation and rural diversification that can be accommodated in countryside locations, without any adverse effects upon the character of South Somerset's rural areas or existing development. It is important that the various indirect consequences of employment development such as security fencing, lighting, advertising material, open storage and vehicle parking and manoeuvring provisions would not harm the visual environment.

¹⁴⁴ Towards a one nation economy: A 10-point plan for boosting employment productivity in rural areas. (August 2015)

Question 9.4

Do you think the Local Plan should include a policy that refers to new-build commercial developments and changes of use of existing premises in rural areas outside of the Main Settlement Boundaries?

- 9.18 No changes are proposed to policies EP6 (Henstridge Airfield), EP7 (New Build Live/Work Units) or EP8 (New and Enhanced Tourist Facilities).

Question 9.5

Do you agree that no changes be made to Policies EP6, EP7 and EP8?

Retail Hierarchy

- 9.19 Yeovil is the principal retail centre in the District, and will be the main focus for new retail and leisure investment that requires a high level of accessibility. Major new regional scale shopping facilities will not be supported outside Yeovil in order to retain the retail hierarchy, build on existing infrastructure and focus shops where people have the greatest access to them.
- 9.20 Chard, Crewkerne, Ilminster, and Wincanton function as important service centres, providing a range of facilities and services for an extensive rural catchment area. These settlements (identified as Primary Market Towns in the Local Plan Settlement Hierarchy) perform the role of Market Towns in retail terms.
- 9.21 Ansford & Castle Cary, Langport & Huish Episcopi and Somerton contain groups of shops including a supermarket and a range of non-retail services such as banks and local public facilities (e.g. libraries) and these settlements (identified as Local Market Towns in the Local Plan Settlement Hierarchy) perform the role of District Centres in retail terms.
- 9.22 Bruton, Ilchester, Martock, Milborne Port, South Petherton and Stoke sub Hamdon (identified as Rural Centres in the Local Plan Settlement Hierarchy) function as Local Centres in retail terms, having a range of small shops of a local nature serving a small catchment, such as a small supermarket, newsagents, a sub-post office or pharmacy.
- 9.23 Policy EP9 (Retail Hierarchy) sets out the retail hierarchy and will determine how new net growth will be distributed over the plan period. Yeovil will continue to be the main focus for new retail and leisure investment and the Market Towns, District Centres and Local Centres will accommodate development which will maintain their retail and service role and support their position in the retail hierarchy, thereby maintaining the vitality and viability of these centres. The Policy is appropriate and compliant with the NPPF and no alterations are proposed.

Shopping in Yeovil

- 9.24 Policy EP10 of the current Local Plan (Convenience and Comparison Shopping in Yeovil) quantifies upper limits of new retail floorspace that will be permitted in Yeovil. This was intended to give some protection to the other main shopping centres by seeking to direct other new retail developments to them. However, there is a renewed focus on regenerating Yeovil through the Refresh and the policy actually curtails the potential for growth of the town. Furthermore, there is little if any evidence to suggest that, should the upper limit for development ever be achieved, retailers, particularly the national brands, would necessarily choose to locate to an alternative smaller centre in South Somerset instead.
- 9.25 It may therefore be counter-productive to continue to apply this policy and it may be more appropriate that it is deleted.

Question 9.6

Do you agree that upper limits of retail development are not in the best interests of regenerating Yeovil and that Policy EP10 should be deleted?

Sequential Approach to locating Main Town Centre Uses

- 9.26 No alterations are proposed to Policy EP11 (Sequential Approach) as it accurately reflects the requirements of the NPPF.
- 9.27 The Primary Shopping Areas within the four Market Towns cover similar areas when compared with the town centre boundaries, and the two designations are identical in Wincanton. The Market Towns in South Somerset do not have extensive areas of non-retail main town centre uses, so the need to identify separate town centre and primary shopping area boundaries could be reconsidered.
- 9.28 The Council could delete the primary shopping areas in the four Market Towns; adopt the town centre boundaries as the policy basis for applying the sequential test; and use these in identifying whether a site was 'edge of centre' for retail uses under the terms of the NPPF.

Question 9.7

Do you agree that the Council should delete the separate 'Primary Shopping Area' designations in settlements other than Yeovil; and adopt these Town Centre Boundaries as the basis for applying the Sequential Test?

Retail Impact Assessments

- 9.29 The Local Plan does not allocate land for retailing as evidence in the Retail and Main Town Centres Uses Study¹⁴⁵ suggests there is sufficient land available in existing town centres to meet short-term needs.
- 9.30 Policy EP12 (Floorspace Threshold for Impact Assessments) sets out the impact thresholds for the different tiers of the retail hierarchy. Proposals for retail floorspace above these existing thresholds will require a retail impact assessment. Policy EP12 includes thresholds lower than the NPPF guidance (over 2,500m² gross).
- 9.31 The Retail and Main Town Centres Uses Study confirms the impact threshold in the NPPF (over 2,500m² gross) is disproportionate in relation to the existing scale of most town centres within South Somerset, and development of this scale would exceed or represent a significant proportion of the overall floorspace projection for each town over the plan period. Having re-considered whether these thresholds are still relevant, the Study concludes that the current impact thresholds remain appropriate:
- Yeovil over 2,500m² gross;
 - Market Towns over 750m² gross;
 - Langport District Centre over 500m² gross;
 - Other District Centres over 250m² gross; and
 - Local centres over 250m² gross.

Protection of Retail Frontages

- 9.32 Primary Shopping Frontages are at the heart of the town centre, they contain streets that are dominated by shops and have the greatest pedestrian footfall. It is considered important to retain the function of Primary Shopping Frontages as dominant shopping areas, as large numbers of shops in close proximity to each other are important to the attractiveness of the centre and its convenience to shoppers.
- 9.33 These frontages have been reviewed in the Retail and Main Town Centres Uses Study and changes to the extent of designated frontages are proposed within the sections of this document which relate to specific settlements.
- 9.34 The Council recognises the changes of use allowed through permitted development by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order and that protection of smaller retail premises may be limited. However, these potential losses of retail units make it more important for the Council to continue to seek to protect the remaining retail activities.
- 9.35 Policy EP13 (Protection of Retail Frontages) acknowledges in any event that non A1 uses can contribute positively to the town centre in accordance with the NPPF. Criterion 4 could be strengthened by a minor amendment to take account the extent to which a use would contribute to the vitality and viability of the centre.

¹⁴⁵ South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study (June 2017)

Question 9.8

Do you agree that Policy EP13 should be amended to include a criteria which takes account of “the character and nature of the use proposed, including the level of pedestrian activity associated with it and its contribution to the vitality and viability of the centre”?

Neighbourhood Centres

- 9.36 Local Plan Policy EP14 (Neighbourhood Centres) states that the development within neighbourhood centres should be of a scale and type to meet the local needs of the area within which they will be located and must not adversely affect the vitality and viability of any town centres identified by the LPA
- 9.37 Neighbourhood centres are small parade of shops of purely neighbourhood significance. They fall below Local Centres within the hierarchy and would not be considered to be town centres in policy terms. Policy EP14 remains fit for purpose and no specific issues arise.

Protection and Provision of Local Shops, Community Facilities and Services

- 9.38 The objective of Policy EP15 (Protection and Provision of Local Shops, Community Facilities and Services) is to offer some protection to shops, community facilities and services regarded as important and which if closed or changed to private use, would be a real loss to the community. It requires applicants submitting any proposal to redevelop an existing local amenity to an alternative use, which would not be of benefit to the community and would result in a significant or total loss of that service or facility, to either provide alternative provision or demonstrate that there are no suitable, viable alternative community uses. It also requires applicants to explore options for establishing a social enterprise or a community owned or run establishment which may prove more cost effective than a commercially operated one.
- 9.39 As a predominantly rural District with an ageing population, the importance of maintaining access to valued local facilities will continue.
- 9.40 Under the Localism Act, however, the District Council is now required to maintain a list of assets of community value¹⁴⁶, which can be either land or buildings, nominated by local community groups or parish councils. When listed assets come up for sale or change of ownership, local community groups are given the time to develop a bid and raise the money to bid to buy the asset when it comes on the open market. Properties generally remain on the list for five years.

¹⁴⁶ Localism Act 2011 Part 5 Chapter 3

- 9.41 When offered for sale, there is an initial six-week interim period, during which a community group may express interest in bidding. If one does, a six-month moratorium begins from when the asset is put up for sale, i.e. including the six-week interim period, to allow a community interest group to put a bid together. Various Permitted Development and Change of Use rights do not apply to a property if it is listed in the Register of Assets of Community Value. Martock Post Office is an example which is currently listed in the District Council's Register. The full Register can be found on the District Council's website [here](#).
- 9.42 The question therefore arises as to whether the Local Plan still needs to include Policy EP15, which seeks to provide a similar level of protection of local services and facilities to that provided by powers contained in the Localism Act.

Question 9.9

Given that communities can now seek protection of valued local services and facilities through measures provided by the Localism Act, is there still a need to continue to use Policy EP15 in the determination of planning applications?

Question 9.10

Are there any issues that have been missed from Section 9: Economic Prosperity?

10. Housing

Current Approach

- 10.1 The NPPF expects LPAs to plan for a mix of housing based upon current and future demographic trends and the needs of different groups within the community¹⁴⁷. The Strategy section of the Local Plan addresses the overall housing need and settlement strategy. The housing section has policies addressing a range of housing topics including: strategic housing sites; previously developed land; provision of affordable housing; mix of market housing; care homes and specialist housing accommodation; Gypsies, Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople; replacement dwellings in the countryside; and agricultural workers dwellings.
- 10.2 The Government's White Paper, 'Fixing our broken housing market, February 2017'¹⁴⁸, sets out a programme of reform designed to address housing delivery nationally. The document builds on earlier consultations, Written Ministerial Statements and planned amendments to the NPPF and concludes with a consultation on the proposals.
- 10.3 Amongst others, issues addressed in the White Paper include support for small scale developers, custom and self-builders, starter homes and affordable housing.
- 10.4 The Government has also stated its intention to review the Nationally Described Space Standard to ensure greater local housing choice.

Strategic Housing Sites

- 10.5 Local Plan Policy HG1 (Strategic Housing) safeguards the key site proposal at Crewkerne. Whilst there is now planning permission on the site¹⁴⁹ at this time it is considered prudent to retain the allocation as work has not yet commenced and there remain concerns around viability due to the provision of the link road. For more detail please see the Crewkerne section of this document.

Previously Developed Land Target

- 10.6 Policy HG2 (The Use of Previously Developed Land for New Housing Development) is discussed along with Policy SS7 (Phasing of Previously Developed Land) in Section 5 of this document.

¹⁴⁷ NPPF, 2012. Paragraph 50

¹⁴⁸

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/590464/Fixing_our_broken_housing_market_-_print_ready_version.pdf

¹⁴⁹ Planning applications 05/0061/OUT -525 dwellings, employment land , school and community infrastructure, 13/02201/REM – 203 dwellings and first phase of link road, 14/02141/OUT – 110 dwellings, 60 bed nursing home and 2 ha of employment land.

Affordable Housing

- 10.7 The definition of affordable housing is currently set out in the NPPF and includes social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing.¹⁵⁰
- 10.8 The Housing White Paper¹⁵¹ consults on a revised definition of affordable housing. The proposed revised definition is much broader and incorporates a number of different types of affordable housing; it includes and defines: affordable housing, social rented and affordable rented housing, starter homes, discounted market sales housing, affordable private rent housing and intermediate housing.
- 10.9 In effect, intermediate affordable housing generally comprises all those housing products that are at a cost above social rent but below market levels.
- 10.10 The Government also proposes to make it clear in national policy that local authorities should seek to ensure that housing sites deliver a minimum of 10% affordable home ownership units.
- 10.11 Starter Homes are now included in the definition of affordable housing. However, the SHMA shows that, at a 20% discount (or 80% of the cost of market housing), starter homes also serve a cohort of people who can afford private rented accommodation, which means it does not really contribute toward meeting the truly affordable housing need¹⁵².
- 10.12 The target and threshold for the provision of affordable housing is addressed in Local Plan Policy HG3 (Provision of Affordable Housing). At the time the Local Plan was being adopted the Government's approach to contributions for affordable housing was subject to legal challenge. The legal position has now been established by the Court of Appeal and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) states that "contributions should not be sought from developments of 10-units or less, and which have a maximum combined gross floorspace of no more than 1,000 square metres (gross internal area)"¹⁵³.
- 10.13 The PPG does allow for a commuted sum to be sought on developments of between 6 and 10 units in 'rural areas'¹⁵⁴. However, South Somerset has no 'rural areas' defined under section 157 (1) of the Housing Act 1985 therefore this provision does not apply.
- 10.14 The changes to the PPG mean that in South Somerset the national threshold applies i.e. affordable housing contributions are being sought from developments of over 10 dwellings (11 or more) or over 1,000m² (internal floor area). The Council has been

¹⁵⁰ NPPF, 2012. Annex 2: Glossary

¹⁵¹ Fixing our broken housing market, 2017

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/590464/Fixing_our_broken_housing_market_-_print_ready_version.pdf

¹⁵² Mendip, Sedgemoor, South Somerset and Taunton Deane Strategic Housing Market Assessment, October 2016,

https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/862544/somerset_final_shma_oct2016_revised.pdf

¹⁵³ Paragraph: 031 Reference ID: 23b-031-20161116

¹⁵⁴ Rural Areas: this applies to rural areas described under [section 157\(1\) of the Housing Act 1985](#), which includes National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

applying this threshold since May 2016. Consequently, the LPR provides the opportunity to amend the threshold in Policy HG3.

- 10.15 The current target for affordable housing is 35% of the total number of dwellings on qualifying sites. This means that no affordable housing contribution is sought for the remaining 65% of dwellings. The SHMA¹⁵⁵ indicates that there is a net annual requirement for 206 affordable dwellings in South Somerset; this equates to 33.9% (rounded to 34%)¹⁵⁶ of the annual need.
- 10.16 Since the beginning of the Plan period, monitoring shows that 38% of completions in the District have been on sites of 10 dwellings or less. In the current policy context no affordable housing contributions through planning obligations would be sought on such sites. However, a small number of sites can be entirely affordable housing with the help of grant funding. The 'open book' approach to viability gives applicants the opportunity to present the case for a reduced contribution. This means that opportunities to deliver affordable housing in South Somerset are reduced by these factors. In addition, affordable housing is exempt from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) which means much of the viability arguments on larger sites focus around affordable housing.
- 10.17 Monitoring shows that 1,639 net affordable dwellings have been built or are programmed to be built over the first 13 years of the plan period¹⁵⁷. This equates to 126 net dwellings per annum. The data includes instances where the Homes and Communities Agency forward funded the delivery of affordable dwellings on sites such as Wyndham Park in Yeovil and New Barns Farm in Wincanton. Also included would be 100% affordable housing schemes.
- 10.18 The LPR will be subject to a plan wide viability assessment and this will include an assessment of the proposed affordable housing target as part of the overall plan. The need for affordable housing will be balanced against the ability to deliver development.
- 10.19 Policy HG4 (Provision of Affordable Housing – sites of 1-5 Dwellings) seeks a commuted sum towards affordable housing provision on small sites. In response to the change in national guidance on planning obligations the Council has not been enforcing Policy HG4.

¹⁵⁵ Mendip, Sedgemoor, South Somerset and Taunton Deane Strategic Housing Market Assessment, Final Report October 2016:

https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/862544/somerset_final_shma_oct2016_revised.pdf

¹⁵⁶ 206 dwellings = 33.9% of 607 dwellings.

¹⁵⁷ South Somerset Authority Monitoring Report, 2017

Question 10.1

Which of the following options regarding affordable housing should be taken forward in the LPR?

Option 10.1

10.1(a) Policy HG3 Provision of Affordable Housing - retain the existing affordable housing target of 35% subject to viability.

10.1(b) Policy HG3 Provision of Affordable Housing - amend the affordable housing target to 34% subject to viability.

10.1(c) Policy HG3 Provision of Affordable Housing - another option.

Question 10.2

Do you agree that Policy HG4 should be deleted?

- 10.20 With regards to the mix of affordable housing tenure, the Local Plan currently seeks 67% social rented affordable housing and 33% intermediate products. The latest SHMA suggests that a reasonable tenure mix across the County would be as follows:

Figure 10.1: Suggested Affordable Housing Tenure Mix

Type of affordable housing	Percentage
Social rented	70-80%
Intermediate	10-15%
Affordable rented	10-15%

Source: SHMA, 2016

- 10.21 Given the proposed new definition of affordable housing, the above would translate to 70-80% social rented affordable housing and 20-30% intermediate products.
- 10.22 The SHMA suggests that the indicative targets for the mix of affordable housing type and size would be as follows:

Figure 10.2: Indicative targets for affordable housing by type and size

Size	Rented	Intermediate/Starter Homes
1 bedroom	35-40%	15-20%
2 bedrooms	35-40%	50-55%
3 bedrooms	20%	25-30%
4+ bedrooms	5%	0-5%

Source: SHMA, 2016

Space Standards

- 10.23 As already noted the Government has stated its intention to review the Nationally Described Space Standard¹⁵⁸. Currently the Council has not adopted the space standard. At this time it does not have the evidence to justify the inclusion of the standard in policy.
- 10.24 The SHMA concludes that in the market sector, the analysis did not find any strong evidence for adopting the national space standard; this is due to the way households occupy homes (e.g. using a small third bedroom for an office). It does however point out that there is a lack of transparency in some developer sales literature regarding whether bedrooms are designed for one or two-person occupancy.
- 10.25 For affordable housing, the SHMA concludes that there is a case for adopting the standard; however the Registered Providers with whom the issue was discussed said that they would build to the former housing quality standards anyway. There is a stronger case for adopting the standards for new social or affordable rented homes provided by house builders, but this would need to be balanced against overall viability and the ability to meet housing targets.

Question 10.3

Do you consider that the Council should gather further evidence to support the introduction of the Nationally Described Space Standard?

Achieving a Mix of Market Housing

- 10.26 Local Plan Policy HG5 (Achieving a Mix of Market Housing) seeks to achieve a range house types and sizes across the District particularly on large sites – 10 or more dwellings. On small sites the type and size of homes should be taken in the context of the surroundings and contribute towards sustainable development. The mix of housing type and size is informed by the prevailing SHMA.
- 10.27 The SHMA stakeholder work typically identified a demand for bungalows. Where developments including bungalows are found it is clear that these are very popular to

¹⁵⁸ Technical housing standards – nationally described space standard, March 2015
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/524531/160519_Nationally_Described_Space_Standard_Final_Web_version.pdf

older people downsizing. It is acknowledged that providing significant numbers of bungalows involves cost implications for the developer given the typical plot size compared to floor space; however providing an element of bungalows should be given strong consideration on appropriate sites, allowing older households to downsize while freeing up family accommodation for younger households.

- 10.28 The 2016 SHMA provides new evidence to inform the mix and type of housing required and indicates the following:

Figure 10.3: Indicative targets for market housing by type and size

Size	Market
1 bedroom	5-10%
2 bedrooms	30-35%
3 bedrooms	40-45%
4+ bedrooms	15-20%

Source: SHMA, 2016

Question 10.4

Do you consider that the current approach of using the SHMA to inform the mix of market and affordable housing is still appropriate?

Self-build and Custom Housebuilding

- 10.29 The Government is keen to promote self-build and custom house building; this includes ensuring its exemption from the Community Infrastructure Levy and the recent introduction of new legislation.
- 10.30 As required by the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 the Council has a register of individuals or associations of individuals seeking to acquire serviced plots of land on which to build and occupy homes. The Council is required to provide the requisite number of plots to meet the need on the Register.
- 10.31 The SHMA¹⁵⁹ considers the role of self-build and custom housebuilding and concludes that there are those aspirational self-build and custom builders who have registered with the Council and are mostly seeking detached dwellings across villages where they have strong local connections. Additionally a review of planning applications suggests that many more people are 'getting on with it' as they already owned land or had in some way secured a site.
- 10.32 At a Government led conference in January 2017, it was confirmed that single plot dwelling completions and commitments can be counted towards meeting the need for plots on the Register. As at 30 April 2017 there were 50 individuals registered in South Somerset. The Council's own monitoring as at 31 March 2017 shows that 830 dwellings have been completed and 328 dwellings are committed on single plot sites.

¹⁵⁹ Section 12

This suggests that South Somerset is more than meeting the need for self-build and custom housebuilding.

- 10.33 The approach to self-build and custom housebuilding varies across the country; Teignbridge District Council has introduced a Local Plan Policy to support prospective custom builders by requiring 5% of dwelling plots on sites of more than 20 dwellings to be for sale to custom builders. If the plots are not sold within 12 months there is the option of keeping them on the market as custom build or offering them to the Council or a Registered Provider before they are built out by the developer. A supporting Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been produced¹⁶⁰. As at January 2017, no custom build plots approved under this Policy had been completed.

Question 10.5

How do you think South Somerset District Council should address the need for self-build and custom housebuilding?

Option 10.5

- 10.5(a)** Allocate sites for self-build and custom housebuilding.
- 10.5(b)** Introduce a policy requiring developments above a certain threshold to achieve a specific percentage of self-build and custom housebuilding plots.
- 10.5(c)** Give general support for self-build and custom housebuilding as part of the overall housing mix.
- 10.5(d)** Another option (please specify).

Care Homes and Specialist Accommodation

- 10.34 The Housing White Paper¹⁶¹ is keen to support the provision of housing for older people and those with disabilities. Local Plan Policy HG6 (Care Homes and Specialist Accommodation) allows for the provision of care homes or similar specialist accommodation such as Continuing Care Retirement Communities and Extra Care housing. The SHMA highlights the need for specialist care home bedspaces in the District. It is therefore considered to be appropriate to retain Policy HG6. However, it should be noted that provision is constrained by affordability, especially the ability of the County Council to fund placements.

¹⁶⁰ Custom & Self Build Housing Supplementary Planning Document, July 2016
<https://www.teignbridge.gov.uk/media/1780/custom-and-self-build-housing-spd.pdf>

¹⁶¹

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/590464/Fixing_our_broken_housing_market_-_print_ready_version.pdf

Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

- 10.35 Local Plan Policy HG7 (Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople) states that site allocations will be made to accommodate the identified need for residential pitches (23), transit pitches (10) and Travelling Showpeople plots (6). The policy also sets out the criteria to be used to guide the location of sites.
- 10.36 Planning Policy for Traveller sites¹⁶² expects LPAs to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites to provide five years' worth of sites against their locally set targets. They should also be able to identify specific sites for years 6-10 and where possible for years 11-15.
- 10.37 The AMR shows that the Council has consistently managed to deliver residential pitches (i.e. where people can permanently stay), but has been less able to facilitate transit sites and sites specifically for travelling showpeople.
- 10.38 In simple terms the Council is currently exceeding the residential pitches target having realised 38 pitches since 2006¹⁶³. However, looking ahead, the Gypsy and Traveller Needs Assessment¹⁶⁴ shows that over the period 2016 to 2032 the Council will need to deliver a further 30 residential pitches, and therefore will still be required to take a proactive stance to continuing to meet needs.
- 10.39 The HELAA 'call for sites' process failed to identify any sites for Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople. The Council is exploring opportunities to use public sector land to make transit site provision but if this is not successful they may have to consider allocating land for such a use.

Question 10.6

Is the current approach to the provision of sites for Gypsy, Travellers or Travelling Showpeople use acceptable?

Question 10.7

Are you aware of any suitable and available sites with the potential for use as a Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showpeople people site, transit or permanent?

¹⁶² Planning policy for traveller sites, DCLG, August 2015

¹⁶³ South Somerset Authority Monitoring Report, September 2017

¹⁶⁴ Gypsy and Travellers Needs Assessment Update, Somerset Local Planning Authorities, Dr Jo Richardson in partnership with John Bloxsom, September 2-13
https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/856723/final_copy_12_september_2013.pdf

Replacement Dwellings and Extensions in the Countryside

- 10.40 National policy seeks to deliver a wide choice of homes and widen opportunities for ownership to create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities¹⁶⁵. The replacement of small dwellings in the countryside with much larger properties can radically change the character of a site and reduce the supply of smaller dwellings, particularly in rural areas.
- 10.41 Local Plan Policy HG8 (Replacement Dwellings in the Countryside) aims to give protection to traditional smaller properties in the countryside which in turn meets the objective of providing housing to meet the needs of the community. It is therefore considered that Policy HG8 should be retained a part of the LPR.

Agricultural, forestry and other occupational dwellings in the countryside

- 10.42 There are occasions where the nature of agricultural and other rural businesses make it essential for a worker to live on or in close proximity to the business. National guidance allows for this¹⁶⁶.
- 10.43 Policy HG9 (Housing for Agricultural and Related Workers) sets out the criteria by which planning applications for such dwellings will be assessed and should be retained through the LPR.
- 10.44 In order to retain a property approved under Policy HG9, a restrictive condition will be included limiting its occupation by a person solely, mainly or last working in agriculture, forestry or rural enterprise. It is accepted that there will be circumstances where these dwellings are no longer required for the purpose they were originally intended. Policy HG10 (Removal of Agricultural and other Occupancy Conditions) ensures that any planning permission to remove a restrictive occupancy condition for any dwelling in the countryside is adequately justified.
- 10.45 No issues have been identified with Policies HG9 and HG10.

Question 10.8

Are there any issues that have been missed from Section 10: Housing?

¹⁶⁵ NPPF, 2012. Paragraph 50

¹⁶⁶ NPPF, 2012. Paragraph 55

11. Transport and Accessibility

Current Approach

- 11.1 The current policy approach acknowledges the reality that, in this rural district, cars are an essential part of travel. Nevertheless, a movement towards sustainable transport is necessary to reap its benefits, including improved air quality and health, social inclusion, and a reduction in traffic congestion.
- 11.2 Reducing car use in favour of car-sharing, homeworking, walking, cycling, rail, and other lower emission vehicles will improve air quality but a modal shift is unlikely to resolve the issue alone. A move away from the conventional internal combustion engines, to other power sources, has great potential to improve air quality, which is a particular issue in Yeovil.

District-wide Modal Shift

- 11.3 Reducing single car occupancy and the need to travel are fundamental to achieving modal shift. The following measures are promoted to achieve the shift: providing good information, encouraging electric car use, incentivising sustainable travel, cycling, walking, home working, public transport, travel planning, and timing of provision.
- 11.4 Policy TA1 (Low Carbon Travel) requires all new residential and employment development to provide: electric charging points adjacent to all car parking spaces; space suitable for homeworking; cycle parking; Travel Plans; Travel Information Packs; Green Travel Vouchers; improved public transport connections; and to ensure that sustainable transport measures are in place prior to first occupation.
- 11.5 In addition to updating and clarifying the Policy, it is proposed to incorporate thresholds, similar to those used in Policy TA4 (Travel Plans) to make the Policy's requirements commensurate with the level of development proposed.
- 11.6 Other issues and suggested improvements to the Policy are listed below.
- i) Currently, paper travel information packs are required. As a travel website is already required by Policy TA4 (Travel Plans), this requirement for travel information can be updated and subsumed.
- ii) Instead of requiring an electric charging point adjacent to all car parking spaces for all new residential or employment development, the following thresholds are proposed in the interests of reasonability:
- Each new dwelling with one or more parking spaces shall provide at least one electric charging point (16 amp minimum).
 - All new non-residential developments providing 50 or more car parking spaces shall be served by electric vehicle charging points (16 amp minimum) for at least two percent of all spaces. Every effort should be made to safeguard the most desirable parking spaces for the charging of electric vehicles.

- In addition, all new retail or leisure sites providing car parking for 50 or more spaces shall provide at least one rapid charger to service customer vehicles.

iii) In the interest of reducing the administrative burden on developers, it is proposed to reduce the period of use for Green Travel Vouchers from one year to 6 months, and only require Green Travel Voucher schemes to be implemented where a Travel Plan Statement is required under the Somerset County Transport Strategy¹⁶⁷.

Rail

11.7 Policy TA2 (Rail) seeks to protect sites of infrastructural significance, and encourage the development of land for both passenger rail facilities and rail freight hubs where there is robust evidence in support of developing infrastructure to widen transport choice, in line with paragraph 41 of the NPPF.

11.8 No issues have been identified with this Policy.

Measures to Encourage Sustainable Travel at Chard and Yeovil

11.9 Because of their more urban nature, it was considered appropriate to encourage an even greater choice of sustainable transport modes in Yeovil and Chard, through Policy TA3 (Sustainable Travel at Chard and Yeovil).

11.10 Monitoring¹⁶⁸ shows that the use of this Policy has been limited; this may be because no thresholds are in place for its use, making it unclear and potentially onerous. For the sake of clarity and proportionality, it is proposed to make this Policy more thresholds based, akin to Policy TA4 (Travel Plans).

11.11 The Policy requires preferential and quality car parking spaces for car-sharers "...where the scale of new employment sites would have an impact on existing traffic..." This terminology is vague, and unquantifiable, and repeats the requirement imposed in the Somerset County Parking Strategy and in Policy TA6 (Parking Standards). This requirement should be deleted from TA3.

Travel Plans

11.12 Policy TA4 (Travel Plans) uses development thresholds to determine if and what level of Travel Plan is required – i.e. Measures Only Statements, Travel Plan Statements, or Full Travel Plans. This makes the requirements clear and proportionate to the level of development proposed.

11.13 The thresholds provide a structure to frame the travel plan requirements; however, the current thresholds only cover uses A1, B1, and C3. The thresholds for Policy TA4 need to be expanded to take account of the Somerset Travel Planning Guidance¹⁶⁹ which includes thresholds for a wider list of development types (planning Use Classes).

¹⁶⁷ <http://www.somerset.gov.uk/policies-and-plans/strategies/transport-strategy/>

¹⁶⁸ South Somerset Authority Monitoring Report, September 2017

¹⁶⁹ <http://www.somerset.gov.uk/EasySiteWeb/GatewayLink.aspx?allId=118883>

- 11.14 The updated thresholds should then provide a framework for policies TA1 (Low Carbon Travel), TA3 (Sustainable Travel at Chard and Yeovil), and TA5 (Transport Impact of New Development) to sit. It is therefore suggested to simplify, restructure and remodel those policies around the improved thresholds.

Question 11.1

Do you agree with the proposed amendments to simplify, restructure and remodel policies TA1, TA3, and TA4 around the new development thresholds?

Transport Impacts of Development

- 11.15 The Policy's aim, to promote sustainable transport by addressing the transport implications of all development, is in line with national planning policies and guidance. However, issues with paragraphs ii), v), and vi) of the Policy have been identified and corrections/improvements suggested, detailed below.

ii) Amend the requirement to secure inclusive, safe, and convenient access on foot, cycle, and by public and private transport that addresses the needs of all so that it is commensurate with the type/scale of development.

v) It should be made clear that the Transport Authority has the right to decide when a scheme is a larger scheme thereby requiring a Transport Assessment.

vi) The requirement for 'vehicle servicing' was intended to ensure that development could be serviced by vehicles – i.e. so employment or retail developments could be serviced by HGVs for deliveries. However, the common interpretation of 'vehicle servicing' is work undertaken to a vehicle commonly by a mechanic. A revision to the wording to make the requirement clear is needed.

Question 11.2

Do you agree with the proposed amendments to Policy TA5 (Transport Impacts of Development)?

Parking Standards

- 11.16 The Ministerial Statement¹⁷⁰ of 25 March 2015 seeks to stop local planning authorities from imposing restrictions on the maximum number of parking spaces, which was causing blocked and congested streets and pavement parking.
- 11.17 Policy TA6 (Parking Standards) requires that parking provision in new development should be design-led and based upon site characteristics, location and accessibility, and that it accords with the Somerset County Council's Parking Strategy. The

¹⁷⁰ The Department for Communities and Local Government, and The Rt Hon Sir Eric Pickles: <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/planning-update-march-2015>

Strategy includes parking standards but they are optimal standards which seek to encourage parking provision rather than restrict it. Accordingly, it is in-line with the Statement, and no issues have been identified.

Question 11.3

Are there any issues that have been missed from Section 11: Transport and Accessibility?

12. Health and Wellbeing

Current Approach

- 12.1 The role of the planning system in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities is emphasised in the NPPF. The PPG also encourages the facilitation of good health and wellbeing, health infrastructure¹⁷¹, and open space and sports pitches¹⁷².
- 12.2 The Local Plan seeks to enhance, protect, and provide open space, outdoor playing space, and sports, cultural, and community facilities, which play a key role in enhancing the health and sense of well-being of the local community.
- 12.3 At the time of writing, the Council is currently preparing a Playing Pitch Strategy which will guide contributions for and the provision of playing pitches in the District.

Provision of Open Space, Outdoor Playing Space and Sports, Cultural and Community Facilities in New Development

- 12.4 Policy HW1 (Provision of Open Space, Outdoor Playing Space, Sports, Cultural and Community Facilities in New Development) addresses the provision of open space, outdoor playing space, sports, cultural, and community facilities in new development. It requires the provision of additional open space and other facilities, or contributions towards those facilities to be delivered as appropriate.
- 12.5 Since the adoption of the Local Plan, the Council has adopted the CIL¹⁷³. The Regulation 123 List does not include specific sites to be improved or provided, so the contributions Policy can still function by seeking on site provision or site-specific contributions.
- 12.6 No issues with this Policy have been identified.

Sports Zone

- 12.7 It is the Council's agenda to seek to significantly expand the provision of top quality sports and recreation facilities within Yeovil, through a 'sports zone' facility of at least 1.5ha, to help provide inclusive and participative leisure and sports to meet numerous health and welfare-based goals. Policy HW2 (Sports Zone) should assist in this aim.

¹⁷¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/health-and-wellbeing>

¹⁷² <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/open-space-sports-and-recreation-facilities-public-rights-of-way-and-local-green-space>

¹⁷³ <https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/community-infrastructure-levy/>

12.8 The Council is currently reviewing its sports facility needs. Until this review has concluded it must be assumed that the Sports Zone remains a priority.

12.9 No issues have been identified with the Policy.

Protection of Play Spaces and Youth Provision

12.10 Policy HW3 (Protection of Play Spaces and Youth Provision) seeks to protect equipped play areas and youth facilities by permitting development to them, in full or in part, only if the facilities benefit as a result, if there is a proven oversupply, or if they were inappropriately located.

12.11 The Policy would appear to be appropriate to protect and/or enhance valued play spaces and youth provision, and is considered to accord with current national policy and guidance. Therefore, no issues have been identified.

Question 12.1

Are there any issues that have been missed from Section 12: Health and Wellbeing?

13. Environmental Quality

Current Approach

- 13.1 The NPPF and PPG make clear the requirement for planning to meet the challenges of climate change, flooding and coastal change, air and water quality, and pollution. They also support good design, conserving and enhancing of the historic and natural environments, open space, sports and recreation facilities, public rights of way, and local green space.
- 13.2 The previous Local Plan (1991- 2011) had Policy EC3 (Landscape Character), which was condensed and subsumed into Policy EQ2 (General Development) of the current Local Plan. On reflection, given the rural nature of the District, the re-introduction of a landscape policy akin to Policy EC3 would help to provide clarity and help to safeguard the landscape character of the District.

Question 13.1

Do you agree that a specific landscape policy should be re-introduced?

Addressing Climate Change in South Somerset

- 13.3 Policy EQ1 (Addressing Climate Change in South Somerset) supports proposals for development where they have demonstrated how climate change mitigation and adaptation will be delivered. However, some of these measures are now outdated following three updates to Government advice.
- 13.4 The Ministerial Statement of 25 March 2015¹⁷⁴ states that emerging local plans should not include policies requiring any level of the Code for Sustainable Homes to be achieved. The Ministerial Statement¹⁷⁵ of 18 June 2015 states that applications for wind energy development should only be granted if the site has already been identified as suitable for wind energy development in a local or neighbourhood plan, and if it has the backing of the local communities that it may affect. Finally, the 'Fixing the foundations: Creating a more prosperous nation'¹⁷⁶ White Paper, July 2015, expressed the Government's intentions not to go ahead with on-site energy efficiency standards or the zero carbon Allowable Solutions carbon offsetting scheme.
- 13.5 It is necessary to delete the requirements of the Policy that are at odds with the aforementioned planning guidance updates.

¹⁷⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/planning-update-march-2015>

¹⁷⁵ <https://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201516/cmhansrd/cm150618/wmstext/150618m0001.htm>

¹⁷⁶ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/443898/Productivity_Plan_web.pdf

Question 13.2

Is this approach to addressing climate change in South Somerset correct?

General Development

- 13.6 Policy EQ2 (General Development) is concerned with achieving a high quality development, considering a wide range of indicators. As it applies to all development, monitoring¹⁷⁷ shows that it is the most used policy in the Local Plan.
- 13.7 The Policy advocates sustainable construction principles but does not impose on-site energy efficiency standards or the zero carbon Allowable Solutions so it is still in line with current national policy and guidance.
- 13.8 No issues with the Policy have been identified.

Historic Environment

- 13.9 South Somerset has a strong and valued heritage and historic character. The high usage¹⁷⁸ of Policy EQ3 (Historic Environment) highlights the importance of the Policy which seeks to conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the historic significance and important contribution to local distinctiveness, character, and sense of place of heritage assets.
- 13.10 The policy is in-line with current national planning policy and guidance¹⁷⁹ and no issues have been identified.

Biodiversity

- 13.11 South Somerset is home to a range of important habitats and species, with many internationally, nationally, and locally designated sites for biodiversity¹⁸⁰.
- 13.12 Policy EQ4 (Biodiversity) seeks to protect and, where appropriate, enhance biodiversity. It is considered to accord with the Council's statutory duty¹⁸¹ and to national policy and guidance¹⁸².
- 13.13 No issues have been identified.

¹⁷⁷ South Somerset Authority Monitoring Report, September 2017

¹⁷⁸ South Somerset Authority Monitoring Report, September 2017

¹⁷⁹ NPPF, 2012 (Chapter 12: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment; and PPG 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment')

¹⁸⁰ Early Review of the Local Plan, Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment) Scoping Report (May 2017)

¹⁸¹ Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006

¹⁸² NPPF, 2012; and PPG: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/natural-environment#biodiversity-and-ecosystems>

Green Infrastructure

13.14 Green infrastructure is “a network of multi-functional green space... which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities”¹⁸³.

13.15 The NPPF states that local authorities should plan to create, protect, enhance and manage green infrastructure. Policy EQ5 (Green Infrastructure) promotes the provision of green infrastructure based on the enhancement of existing areas such as open space, accessible woodland, and river corridors, and by ensuring that new development provides open spaces and green corridor links between new and existing green spaces. As such, the Policy is considered to be in-line with current national policy and guidance, and no issues have been identified.

Woodlands and Forests

13.16 Woodlands and forests provide social, environmental, and economic benefits, so it is necessary to protect and expand them beyond the District’s coverage of 5%, which is significantly below the national average.

13.17 Policy EQ6 (Woodland and Forests) supports the implementation of the South West Woodland and Forestry Framework which seeks to protect and enhance the value and character of the District’s trees, ensuring woodland areas do not fall below the levels recorded in 2005.

13.18 This Policy is in-line with national policy and guidance¹⁸⁴, and no issues have been identified.

Pollution Control

13.19 National policy and guidance¹⁸⁵ make clear that local planning authorities should have a role in controlling pollution, which Policy EQ7 (Pollution Control) seeks to do.

13.20 The District’s air quality is generally good¹⁸⁶; however, Yeovil does have air quality issues, primarily associated to vehicle emissions, and is designated as an Air Quality Management Area¹⁸⁷ (AQMA). An Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) is in place to mitigate the localised air quality issue, and is currently being updated. The NPPF requires that development in AQMAs is consistent with the AQAP. For the sake of clarity, it is proposed to make clear the need to support the AQAP within the Policy or supporting text. It is also proposed to ensure that emissions from traffic form part of the air quality considerations.

¹⁸³ NPPF March 2012

¹⁸⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/natural-environment>

¹⁸⁵ NPPF, March 2012; and NPPG Sections: Air quality; Light pollution; Natural environment; Noise; and Water supply, wastewater and water quality

¹⁸⁶ Early Review of the Local Plan, Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment) Scoping Report (May 2017)

¹⁸⁷ South Somerset Air Quality Action Plan Progress Report, 2007

- 13.21 Aviation noise from RNAS Yeovilton, Westlands Airfield, Yeovil, and RNAS Merryfield, Ilton, has been recorded and noise contours mapped to show the expected noise levels geographically. However, there is no policy requirement to consider the maps and guidance – it is only referred to in the description of Ilchester and the supporting text for Policy EQ7. The maps and guidance should form part of Policy EQ7. However, the guidance may need to be updated to include a wider range of development types and, in some cases, require noise surveys to be carried out.
- 13.22 Policy EQ7 controls development that would result in air, light, noise, water quality, or other environmental pollution that would independently or cumulatively harm amenity or health and safety. One issue is that the Policy does not explicitly include polluted/contaminated land. For the sake of clarity, contaminated land should explicitly form a consideration of the Policy.
- 13.23 In some circumstances the development of a site may be unacceptable due to land contamination or other pollution. The wrong development in a polluted area may also introduce a ‘sensitive receptor’ (such as new homes next to a noisy or smelly site), causing amenity issues, and potentially impacting negatively on neighbouring, polluting uses that were so located to avoid such conflict. Policy EQ7 does not control proposed development in already polluted areas, which is an issue requiring remedy.

Question 13.3

Do you agree with the suggested approach for pollution control and the revision of Policy EQ7?

Equine Development

- 13.24 South Somerset’s rural nature means it is suited to equine activities. A policy seeking to ensure that equine-related development is appropriate is therefore necessary.
- 13.25 Policy EQ8 (Equine Development) is considered to be effective and in-line with current planning policy and guidance. Accordingly, no issues have been identified.

Question 13.4

Are there any issues that have been missed from Section 13: Environmental Quality?

14. Implementation and Monitoring

Current Approach

- 14.1 Monitoring is necessary to check that the Plan is being successfully implemented and that the outcomes are as intended.
- 14.2 The Authority's Monitoring Report (AMR) is the principal mechanism for monitoring the Local Plan. Monitoring indicators are in place for each strategic objective and policy to allow the progress of objectives and effectiveness of policies to be properly measured. Should any of the policies in the Local Plan be amended as part of this review process, it may also be necessary for the accompanying monitoring indicators to be updated.
- 14.3 The Housing White Paper (2017) consulted on a number of proposed amendments to local authority monitoring, to increase the quantity, quality, and consistency of monitoring information. Nevertheless, as the proposals are only in a consultation phase, they are not implementable. The Council must therefore continue to monitor in-line with its current practice until any new instructions are introduced.

Question 14.1

Are there any issues that have been missed from Section 14: Implementation and Monitoring?

15. Glossary

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) contains a comprehensive glossary of national planning terms that should be read in conjunction with this glossary. The NPPF, Annex 2: Glossary can be viewed on the Government website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

Authority Monitoring Report (AMR): Assesses whether policies and related targets or milestones have been or are being met (including progress against Local Development Scheme), or if not, the reasons why, what impact the Policies are having on national, regional and local targets, and whether policies need adjusting or replacing.

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB): Under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1947, Natural England may designate Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Their primary purpose is to ensure the conservation and enhancement of the natural landscape beauty, including the protection of fauna, flora and geological features.

Best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land: Land in grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification.

Care Home: A residential setting where a number of older people live, usually in single rooms and have access to on-site care services. Since April 2002 all homes in England, Scotland and Wales are known as 'care homes', but are registered to provide different levels of care.

- A home registered simply as a care home providing personal care will provide personal; care only – help with washing, dressing and giving medication.
- A home registered as a care home providing nursing care will provide the same personal care but also have a qualified nurse on duty twenty-four hours a day to carry out nursing tasks. These homes are for people who are physically or mentally frail or for people who need regular attention from a nurse. Some homes, registered either for personal care or nursing care, can be registered for a special care need, for example dementia or terminal illness (HousingCare.org).

Code for Sustainable Homes: The Code for Sustainable Homes in Government Guidance provided a comprehensive measure of the sustainability of new homes, ensuring that sustainable homes deliver real improvements in key areas such as carbon dioxide emissions and water use. It is no longer in place.

Conservation Area: The statutory definition of a conservation area under the Planning, Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 is “an area of special architectural interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.”

Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRC): Continuing Care Retirement Communities are part independent living, part assisted living and part skilled nursing

home. CCRCs offer a tiered approach to the ageing process, accommodating residents' changing needs. Upon entering, healthy adults can reside independently in single-family homes, apartments or condominiums. When assistance with everyday activities becomes necessary, they can move into assisted living or nursing care facilities.

Convenience Shopping: Convenience retailing is the provision of everyday essential items, including food, drink, newspapers/magazines and confectionery.

Communities and Local Government (CLG): The Central Government department responsible for planning and local government.

Comparison Shopping: Comparison retailing is the provision of items not obtained on a frequent basis. These include clothing, footwear, household and recreational goods.

Development Management (DM) Policies: Limited suite of positive, general policies that are set out in the Local Plan and set the criteria against which planning applications will be considered, in order to seek and shape developments in a locally distinctive way.

Development Plan Document (DPD): Development Plan Documents set out policies and proposals and have development plan status and therefore have full weight in the determination of planning applications. They will be subject to community involvement and Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment throughout their preparation and will have independent assessment at an examination by an Inspector. The main types of DPD, which local planning authorities should prepare, include the Local Plan, Allocations SPD, Area Action Plans and Proposals Map.

Edge of centre: for retail purposes, a location that is well connected and up to 300 metres of the primary shopping area. For all other main town centre uses, a location within 300 metres of a town centre boundary. For office development, this includes locations outside the town centre but within 500 metres of a public transport interchange. In determining whether a site falls within the definition of edge of centre, account should be taken of local circumstances.

Employment Land Review (ELR): Report examining existing supply and future demand for employment land in the District.

Extra Care Housing: Extra Care Housing is housing designed with the needs of frailer older people in mind and with varying levels of care and support available on site. People who live in Extra Care Housing have their own self-contained homes, their own front doors and a legal right to occupy the property. Extra Care Housing is also known as very sheltered housing, assisted living, or simply as "housing with care".

Gross Floor Area (GFA): The total of all enclosed spaces fulfilling the functional requirements of the building measured to the internal structural face of the enclosing walls.

Gross Value Added (GVA): Gross Value Added is a measure in economics of the value of goods and services produced in an area, industry or sector of an economy.

Highways Agency (HA): An Executive Agency of the Department for Transport (DfT) responsible for operating, maintaining and improving the strategic road network in England on behalf of the Secretary of State for Transport.

Housing Market Area: The geographical area in which a substantial majority of the employed population both live and work, and where most of those changing home without changing employment choose to stay.

Housing Need: The number of households who lack their own housing or who live in unsuitable housing and cannot afford to meet their housing needs in the market.

Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP): Outlines the delivery and implementation of the Local Plan, with particular regard to the infrastructure necessary to deliver and service the development that is required in the plan period and what funding will be necessary to achieve that infrastructure.

Priority 1 – infrastructure that is fundamental to the delivery of development proposed in the Local Plan. It is likely that development will not be able to commence without the infrastructure. This could include some flood risk mitigation, transport or utility infrastructure.

Priority 2 – infrastructure that is required to support new development proposed in the Local Plan, but the precise timing and phasing is less critical and development can commence ahead of its provision. This could include schools, health care facilities, and sports/play facilities with a specific project and funding commitment.

Priority 3 – infrastructure that is needed in order to build sustainable communities. Although the timing is not as critical as Priority 1 or 2 infrastructure, these items are still desired in order to create high quality places in which to live and work. This could include open space, libraries and other community facilities.

Listed Building: A building which has been placed on the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest requiring a separate application process for development and more stringent consideration.

Low Carbon Economy: Although there is no consistent working definition of a low carbon economy it is best understood as a range of activities which are materially supported by the need to reduce the release of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

Local Development Scheme: A three year work programme showing what future planning documents will be produced and when.

Local Strategic Partnership: Non-statutory, non-executive body bringing together representatives of the public, private and voluntary sectors, which is responsible for

preparing the Sustainable Community Strategy; known in our district as “South Somerset Together”. This group of organisations includes the District Council and Yeovil College (more information can be found on www.southsomersettogether.gov.uk).

Market Town: The settlements of Ansford/Castle Cary, Chard, Crewkerne, Ilminster, Langport/Huish Episcopi, Somerton and Wincanton that provide a broad range and mix of services and facilities and act as general service and employment hubs for the more rural population as well as their own populations. They have a level of growth appropriate to their size.

Migration: The movement of people between geographical areas primarily defined in this context as Local Authority Districts. The rate of migration is usually measured as an annual number of households living in the District at a point in time who are not resident in that District one year earlier.

Microprocessor Optimised Vehicle Actuation (MOVA): A traffic signal control system.

Modal Shift: Ways of enabling travel other than by private car.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF): National document setting out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It is a consideration in planning decisions.

National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG): Government planning guidance.

Neighbourhood Centres: Small parade of shops of purely neighbourhood significance generally located within large residential estates and designed to give access to day-to-day top-up items and services.

Objectively assessed housing need (OAN): The NPPF requires that local planning authorities identify their OAN. This is the future need for affordable and market housing which should be provided for in the Local Plan.

Office of National Statistics (ONS): Government Agency that produces independent information to improve our understanding of the UK’s economy and society.

Open book: The sharing of verifiable information between the applicant and Local Planning Authority that might be potentially commercially sensitive for the purposes of establishing the degree of viability of the site in question under prevailing market conditions.

Out of centre: A location which is not in or on the edge of a centre but not necessarily outside the urban area.

Out of town: A location out of centre that is outside the existing urban area.

Planning Inspector: Independent person appointed from a Central Government agency of Inspectors that deal with planning application appeals/inquiries and Examinations of Local Plans.

Primary Shopping Area: Defined area where retail development is concentrated (generally comprising the primary and those secondary frontages which are adjoining and closely related to the primary shopping frontage).

Primary and secondary frontages: Primary frontages are likely to include a high proportion of retail uses which may include food, drinks, clothing and household goods. Secondary frontages provide greater opportunities for a diversity of uses such as restaurants, cinemas and businesses.

Registered Providers: Previously known as Registered Social Landlords until 1st April 2010, providers of affordable housing including local housing and shared ownership.

Rural Centres: The settlements of Bruton, Ilchester, Martock, Milborne Port, South Petherton and Stoke sub Hamdon that act as focal points in their areas for local employment, shopping, social and community activity, serving the day-to-day needs of their own population and their hinterlands. Provision of growth meeting local needs is appropriate.

Safeguarding Employment Land: Maintenance of existing supply and protection of overall availability and distribution of employment land is a goal. Employment land in this context is defined as uses within Classes B1, B2 and B8 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 as amended.

Self-containment: A good indicator of the level of self-containment of a settlement is the number of people who live and work in that settlement. A high figure reflects a good level of self-containment.

Special Protection Area (SPA): Sites of international importance classified for rare and vulnerable birds and regularly occurring migratory bird species, in accordance with an EC Directive. The Somerset Levels and Moors SPA is the only one in South Somerset.

Superstore: Self-service store selling mainly food, or food and non-food goods, usually with more than 2,500m² trading floorspace, with supporting car parking.

Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (HELAA): Document showing land that has the potential for housing development. Key to demonstrating a 5 year supply of deliverable and 10 year supply of developable land for housing. Can be thought of as a “stock take” of land in order to help provide more certainty when planning for the future.

Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA): Document identifying the objectively assessed housing need (OAN) of the District in terms of quantity and type of housing.

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI): A statement setting out the ways in which the community will be involved/consulted during the production of the Local Development Documents.

Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA): SA is a tool to appraise the degree to which plans and Policies contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. SA incorporates SEA, which is required by an EU Directive where significant development is proposed. An SA/SEA must be undertaken for all DPDs and also SPDs where relevant. The SA Report is published for consultation alongside the Local Plan.

Sustainable Development: A common definition of sustainable development is “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own needs”. NPPF presents a precise working definition.

Sustainable Transport Measures: Sustainable Transport Measures refers to any means of transport with low impact on the environment, and includes walking and cycling, transit oriented development, green vehicles, car sharing and building or protecting urban transport systems that are fuel-efficient, space-saving and promote healthy lifestyles.

Town centre: Area defined on the local authority’s proposal maps, including the primary shopping area and areas predominantly occupied by main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area. References to town centres or centres apply to city centres, town centres, district centres and local centres but exclude small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood significance. Unless they are identified as centres in Local Plans, existing out-of-centre developments, comprising or including main town centre uses, do not constitute town centres.

Travel Information Packs: Travel Information Packs can improve transport choice through raising awareness and encouraging travel to work and school by public transport, cycling and walking by including details of car share schemes and local bus information amongst other things.

Travel to Work Area (TTWA): Catchment area within which people travel to work in a particular place e.g. Yeovil.

Yeovil Urban Development Framework (YUDF): A robust and clear development strategy for delivering the objectives and aspirations of the Yeovil Vision through a spatial framework, with specific urban design guidance for key strategic sites within Yeovil town centre.

Yeovil Vision: An ambitious agenda for positive change commissioned by the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) in 2004, which sets out an agreed vision for the future development, regeneration and renewal of Yeovil.

Zero Carbon: A zero carbon development is one that achieves zero net carbon emissions from energy use on site, on an annual basis.